

**L533: Library Materials for Children and Young Adults
Fall, 2002
Assignment: Book Review
Abbie Anderson**

JOHNSON, Angela. *Looking for Red.* 116p. S & S/Books for Young Readers. 2002. Tr
\$15.95. ISBN 0-689-83253-2. LC 2001042846.

Gr. 5-10—Mike (short for Michaela) is 13 when her older brother, Red, disappears at the beginning of the summer near their Cape Cod home by the sea. Mike tells us her story in short, poetic first-person chapters that ache with her grief and with haunted remembrance as she moves through past and present to make sense of her family, her neighbors, her brother's friends, and herself. Red was the center of Mike's world. He and his best friend, Mark, and girlfriend, Mona, had embraced Mike as part of their circle, and both Mark and Mona lean on Mike in the aftermath of Red's "going away". The three of them share a secret they can hardly bear, until finally Mike is able to tell the whole story to a trusted adult. Younger readers may not appreciate the subtleties in Mike's perceptions of her parents, but the story entrances any age capable of grasping both the beauty of the language, and the poignancy of the material. May be suitable for mid-late teens, who will recognize the bond between Red, Mark and Mona. With her spare lyricism, Angela Johnson shows once again why she has twice won the Coretta Scott King award.—A.

Anderson, Indiana University MLS student, Bloomington, IN.