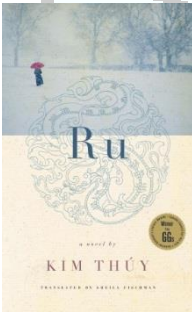




**Fr. Michael Goetz Library Learning Commons
Teacher's Book Review**



***Ru*, Kim Thuy
Reviewed by Ms. Mouchbahani**

Ru, by Kim Thuy, is a short, poetically written novel based on the life of the writer as a young girl in Saigon, Vietnam, a refugee in Malaysia, an immigrant in Quebec, and finally a modern working woman and loving mother of two Canadian-born kids. Through vignettes that flip from the past to the more recent past, to the present, the narrative voice is always compelling, bringing to the surface the reader's sensibilities and empathy for a child forced to dangerously escape her native land and flung into the arms of a new and foreign country. The hardships the narrator and her relatives experience during the Vietnam War and the startling maltreatment of the most vulnerable in the novel—women, children and the handicap—are shared through imagery and diction that are both captivating and moving. This autobiographical novel reminds us that we shouldn't stop tapping into the immigrant and especially refugee experience, to understand the plight of innocent people in the hands of politics and war. As we read, we are bound to remember the deep and hidden crate of memories and scars we don't always see when we look into the eyes of "foreign" people living in our shared country. Books such as *Ru* help us to be less ignorant, more compassionate, and to see things through the lens of a culture otherwise unbeknown to us.