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The New School  
9/25/14

Libro raccomandato:  
For Intermediate and Advanced levels

“TRAME”

A Contemporary Italian Reader

Edited by Christina Abbona-Sneider, Antonio Borra, and  
Cristina Pausini

Yale University Press, 2010

I have been using this book for several years, mostly with private students, and I find it very well done. It contains 33 contemporary readings, from literature (Stefano Benni, Erri De Luca, Susanna Tamaro, Carlo Lucarelli, Andrea De Carlo,...), to newspaper articles (Umberto Eco, Beppe Severgnini,...), to foreign authors who have written books and articles in Italian (model Pap Khouma), to contemporary poets (Patrizia Cavalli, Alda Merini,...), to TV series (Andrea Camilleri), to books that were made into movies (“Io non ho paura”, “Gomorra”,...), and movie directors (Marco Tullio Giordana “La Meglio Gioventù”).

Every author is presented by a biographical introduction “*Chi è l'autore*”, followed by a section that introduces the readers to the subject of the chapter (questions to the students), then a list of *Vocabulary* and *Idiomatic Expressions* used in the chapter, followed by *Cultural Notes* and several pages of *Exercises* (mostly very well done, using idiomatic expressions, vocabulary, nouns and adjectives), and then the *Reading*. After every *Reading* there are *Comprehension Questions*, a more in depth *Analysis of the text*, *Writing suggestions*, and finally an *Internet research* section.

I love the variety of the readings and the styles, the subject matters, the vocabulary exercises (very creative and accurate), and the length of the pieces. I have used other books like “Trame” (Italian Readers) in the past, but most of them had many mistakes and incorrect information. In “Trame” it is rare to find a mistake, and all information is correct and written by Italian natives.

Here is what my student Merve says:

“I love this book. I mostly love the Vocabulary exercises, which help me understand the text. I find the readings progressively harder, so now that I am towards the end of the book I can understand things I could not have understood before. I found the poems a bit more difficult to understand, but I am not someone who loves poems in general. I love seeing the movie suggested, I feel I can learn from the movies, then, I really enjoy the reading, and understand it. I only wish there were Key-Answers to the exercises since sometimes I am not sure of my answers, because they are not so easy at times.”