



2000

# Book Pair

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## 34 Brigham Young University

King Solomon and the two mothers! Each short riddle-story is directly followed by a clear solution. The illustrations by Sís, a Caldecott Honor illustrator, are an engaging accompaniment to the puzzles. Shannon and Sís have created a classic.

Weiner, Lori S., Aprille Best, and Philip A. Pizzo (eds.). *Be A Friend: Children Who Live With HIV Speak*. Illustrated by the children. Albert Whitman, 1996. ISBN 0-8075-0591-9. \$6.95. 40 pp. Grades 3+. Doctors at the National Institute of Health compiled works created by children afflicted with HIV and AIDS. The book is divided into three sections: "I Often Wonder . . ." includes entries addressing what children with HIV often wonder; "Living With HIV" comprises children's thoughts about how being ill affects their daily lives; "Family, Friends, and AIDS" focuses on messages from those whose loved ones have HIV or AIDS. Every page of this compilation speaks with tender, childlike honesty about life with HIV. The text and pictures ask frank questions about God, heaven, and what life would be like without daily medication, pain, and worry. This book nearly brought tears to my eyes. What an excellent way to introduce us all to the need for compassion and understanding toward those afflicted with this tragic disease.

Zemser, Bronwen. *Beyond the Mango Tree*. HarperTrophy, 2000. ISBN 0-06-440786-1. \$4.95. Grades 4-6. Sarina's father's work takes him away for long periods of time, leaving her to take care of her diabetic mother in their strange new country, Liberia. Sarina's mother is controlled by her illness and her fear; she won't let Sarina have what she wants most of all—a friend. But Sarina finds a friend in a slim, sweet Liberian boy named Boima, who teaches Sarina that friendship and understanding can change a person. The portrayal of Sarina's chemically/emotionally imbalanced mother and the death of Boima from yellow fever may disturb the reader, but what makes this book worth reading is Zemser's careful and engaging use of the Liberian-English dialect and a rare taste of the Liberian spirit.



By Sarah Olson

### Fathers

#### Complementary Fiction

Wyeth, Sharon Dennis. *Always My Dad*. Illustrated by Raul Colón. Dragonfly, 1997. ISBN 0-679-88934-5. 32 pp. **Grades K-2**.

Gardella, Tricia. *Just Like My Dad*. Illustrated by Margot Apple. HarperTrophy, 1993. ISBN 0-06-443463-X. 32 pp. **Grade Pre-1**.

With so many of our children living in single-parent homes, it is hard to know how to broach the topic of fathers. One must be both sensitive to those who don't have a father close at hand and understanding of those who do. Using *Always My Dad* and *Just Like My Dad* together can begin an effective exploration of children's love for their fathers, regardless whether the father is often home or often absent.

*Always My Dad* centers on a young girl who dreams of seeing her father. She understands that work takes him away, but it doesn't help the ache in her heart. When a summer at her grandparents' farm brings her father home, every moment is filled with happiness and fun, until he announces that he must leave again. Before he goes, he assures her that he loves her, and no matter where he is, he will always be her dad.

*Just Like My Dad* focuses on a young cowboy who describes the sights, smells, and sounds of working on a ranch with his dad, whom he loves, admires, and more than anything, wants to be like.