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Whispering to witches

Mindi Zobell

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Dale, Anna. *Whispering to Witches*. Illustrated by Melvyn Grant. Bloomsbury, 2004. ISBN 1582348901. \$16.95. 304 pp.

Reviewer: Mindi Zobell

Reading Level: Primary, Intermediate

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Adventure stories; Detective and mystery stories;

Subject: Witches--Juvenile fiction; England--Juvenile fiction; Family--Juvenile fiction; Book--Reviews;

Dale's writing style is very unique. Her opening paragraph catches one's thoughts to ask, "Why?" or "What is going to happen?" The intensity grows with each chapter in a suspenseful children's tale of fairies and witches. The main character, Joe, sets off to spend his winter break with his mother and step-dad, while his dad goes to see a sick relative in Scotland. As Joe arrives in Canterbury, England weird things start to happen, and he realizes he has come upon a coven of witches. He meets a new friend, Twiggy, with whom he solves a mystery and saves witches all over England from being exterminated.

Whispering to Witches is very appropriate for primary and adolescent children. It is comparable to the Harry Potter Series, yet not as over-the-top in fantasy. This story puts you right into the middle of the action and keeps you reading until you have finished the book. The one thing that may distract you is the use of English spellings, which are different from American. Overall it is an excellent story that will encourage any child to love reading.