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With a Little Luck: Surprising Stories of Amazing Discoveries

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Fradin, Dennis Brindell. *With a Little Luck: Surprising Stories of Amazing Discoveries*. Dutton, 2006. ISBN 0525471960. \$17.99. 183 p.

Reviewer: Kate Reynolds

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Informational books;

Subject: Discoveries in science--Juvenile Literature; Books--Reviews;

Fradin highlights eleven amazing discoveries that have changed human understanding of the world around us. Each chapter is concise and provides interesting, pertinent information, without getting bogged down in technical aspects. The book is accessible to intermediate readers without being patronizing. The writing style is chatty, the type set spacious--both make for a comfortable read.

Fradin describes how luck has played a part in human discoveries but that preparation, persistence and insight play even more important roles. He has chosen discoveries in a wide range of fields (astronomy, physics, medicine, paleontology, anthropology, and so on) that will spark the interest of most readers. He gives fair treatment of findings that are still in controversy: for instance, the chapter on anesthesia describes how four different doctors came to claim its discovery but leaves the final judgment up to the reader.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Fradin concludes with a “note to future discoverers” to encourage children to be curious and watchful, that they too may become discoverers.