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### Jeremy Fink and the Meaning of Life

Cassandra Fugal

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Mass, Wendy. *Jeremy Fink and the Meaning of Life*. Little, Brown and Company, 2006. ISBN 0316058297. \$15.99. 289 p.

Reviewer: Cassandra Fugal

Reading Level: Intermediate

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Contemporary realistic fiction;

Subject: Conduct of life--Juvenile fiction; Fathers and sons--Juvenile fiction; Self-realization--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Jeremy Fink is not adventurous. He does not go further than a couple blocks from his apartment, he has never taken a bus or subway without an adult, and he will not try new food; peanut butter sandwiches, pizza, hamburgers and candy are all he will eat. A month before his 13<sup>th</sup> birthday Jeremy receives a present from his father who died 5 years ago. The present is a beautiful wood box with four keyholes, no keys, and an engraved inscription: THE MEANING OF LIFE: FOR JERMEY FINK TO OPEN ON HIS 13TH BIRTHDAY. Now Jeremy and his best friend Lizzy are taking buses *and* subways, without an adult, to search New York City for the keys to open the box. Along the way they meet many different people who share with them what they think is the meaning of life. While the conclusion of the book is seems contrived and somewhat improbable, the story is funny and entertaining. It will get the reader, and like Jeremy and Lizzy, thinking about the meaning of life.