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Greedy Apostrophe: A Cautionary Tale

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Carr, Jan. *Greedy Apostrophe: A Cautionary Tale*. Illustrated by Ethan Long. Holiday House, 2007. ISBN 9780823420063. \$16.95. 32p.

Reviewer: Marsha D. Broadway

Reading Level: Primary

Rating: Significant shortcomings

Genre: Humorous stories;

Subject: Apostrophes-Juvenile fiction; English language-Punctuation-Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Greedy Apostrophe doesn't care for rules and wants to go beyond possessiveness and contractions into many plural forms. Inserting himself where he does not belong gets him into trouble in a classroom where the students try to catch him, but the apostrophe gets away and remains on the loose, showing up where he isn't needed. "Greedy Apostrophe is now banned from working as a punctuation mark." He must be captured and put in the Punctuation Pen to be taught a lesson.

This picture book could have offer a clever strategy for mastering the use of the apostrophe. It did not. The storyline seemed forced, and some examples and statements could promote misunderstanding. Apostrophes are not banned from punctuation. The most instructive page is the appendix, "When Do You Use an Apostrophe?" which simply states the standard rules of applying apostrophes. Pen illustrations with computer-generated color produce people-like punctuation marks to populate the story, but they do little to support a clear understanding of the proper use of apostrophes.

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