



2007

Lawn Boy

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Paulsen, Gary. *Lawn Boy*. Random House, 2007. ISBN 9780385746861. \$12.99. 96 p.

Reviewer: Gillian Streeter

Reading Level: Intermediate

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Contemporary realistic fiction;

Subject: Business enterprises--Juvenile fiction; Summer employment--Juvenile fiction; Money-making projects for children--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

The twelve-year-old protagonist of Paulsen's *Lawn Boy* doesn't want much in the beginning--just a new inner tube for his old ten speed bicycle. But when his slightly batty grandmother gives him his grandfather's old riding mower, he keeps getting more and more lawns to mow. When he meets Arnold, a stockbroker who exchanges stock for mowing, he suddenly is running his own business, employing adults, and sponsoring a prizefighter. All of this comes in handy when someone tries to extort money from him by kidnapping Arnold.

Paulsen's usual straightforward style becomes slightly muddy but holds up in his latest book. *Lawn Boy* is clearly written in the same vein as *The Toothpaste Millionaire*, with a child using industriousness and outright luck to become financially successful. The lawn boy has mostly luck instead of Millionaire's Rufus's math skills and pragmatism, but the results were still positive and well-earned. Teachers and librarians can find accompanying teaching information by going to a website listed on the publication page at the front of the book. A great book for inspiring children to be industrious, and a good starting point to explain how the market economy works.

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