



2008

Little Britches and the Rattlers

Meriam Bates

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Bates, Meriam (2008) "Little Britches and the Rattlers," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 29 : Iss. 4 , Article 2.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol29/iss4/2>

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Kimmel, Eric A. *Little Britches and the Rattlers*. Illustrated by Vincent Nguyen. Marshall Cavendish, 2008. ISBN 9780761454328. \$16.99. 29 p.

Reviewer: Meriam Bates

Reading Level: Toddler, Preschool, Primary

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Western Stories; Fantasy;

Subject: Cowgirls --Juvenile fiction; Rattlesnakes --Juvenile fiction; Texas --Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

One morning a small cowgirl named Little Britches heads out for the rodeo to win first prize at the calf-roping contest, but along the way she runs in to rattlesnakes who want to eat her up. She makes it through by dividing her clothes among them until she is left in nothing but her long johns and handkerchief. The snakes become so jealous of each other's outfits that they eat one another, and Little Britches is able to get her clothes back. She ends up making it to the rodeo just in time to win the calf-roping contest.

Nguyen's sketch-like illustrations and varying shades of brown give the appearance that a layer of dust surrounds everything, drawing the reader back to the glory days of cowboys and rodeos. In direct contrast to the browns, the only brightly colored items in the book are Little Britches' clothes and the rattlesnakes themselves, which draw the readers' attention to the main parts of the story. Kimmel also conveys the feeling of the old west by having both Little Britches and the rattlesnakes use western slang, which makes this book fun to read aloud. The unusual hero and the fun storyline of this book make it especially appealing to adventurous young girls.

Volume 29, no. 4 (March/April 2009)