



2008

# Full Issue

Children's Book Review

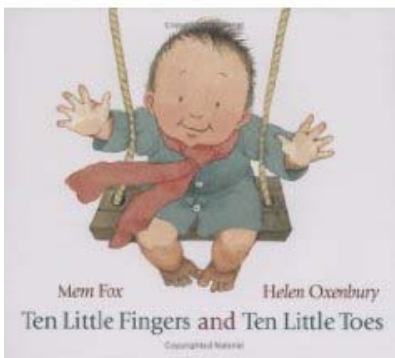
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Fox, Mem. *Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes*. Illustrated by Helen Oxenbury. Harcourt, 2008. ISBN 9780152060572. \$16.00. 32 p.

Reviewer: Marsha D. Broadway

Reading Level: Toddler;

Rating: Excellent;

Genre: Contemporary realistic poetry;

Subject; Babies--Juvenile fiction; Fingers--Juvenile fiction; Toes--Juvenile fiction; Stories in rhyme; Books--Reviews;

Regardless of where they are born, what their ethnicity is, or how they are different, babies bring tender, happy feelings to most people. Fox captures the universal pleasure and love that babies inspire by contrasting differences with the repeated refrain, "And both these babies, as everyone knows, had ten little fingers and ten little toes."

This celebration of babies features Fox's gentle verse complimented by Oxenbury's endearing pencil and watercolor illustrations. Laughing, smiling, round-cheeked infants fill the pages with cheerfulness. A good choice for a baby gift, and an enjoyable read-aloud book to infants. This book will also win the hearts of many adults.

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

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)

Bunting, Eve. *Our Library*. Illustrated by Maggie Smith. Clarion, 2008. ISBN 9780618494583. \$16.00. 32 p.

Reviewer: Marsha D. Broadway

Reading Level: Preschool, Primary

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Animal stories;

Subject: Libraries--Juvenile fiction; Books and reading--Juvenile fiction; Animals--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

When librarian Miss Goose whispers to the children, "Our library is going to close forever," a young raccoon and his friends work to replace the roof, paint the building, raise money, and arrange to move the library to a beautiful meadow.

Bright watercolor and acrylic illustrations create a child-friendly environment in both the library and its community. Young readers discover what books the characters are reading by finding titles prominently displayed on book covers included in the illustrations. The story's theme, "There is nothing you can't learn to do if you have books," is echoed in the characters' actions as they read to gain the information and skills they need to save their public library. In addition to its literacy message, this picture book could be used to encourage children to be proactive in community issues and to recognize the power they have to create positive change.

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

Routman, Stephanie. *Puss In Boots and Other Cat Tails*. Anchorage Press Plays, 1999. ISBN 9780876023846. Contact publisher for fee. 27 p.

Reviewer: Rebeca Wallin;

Reading Level: Preschool, Primary;

Rating: Excellent;

Genre: Adventure Play; Plays; Fantasy Play; Humorous Play;

Subject: Cats; Folklore; Animals; Drama--Reviews;

Theme: Things are not always what they seem

Production Requirements: Minimal and flexible

Acts: 1

Run Time: 50 minutes

Characters: 5–22

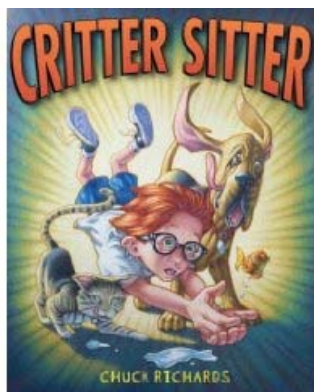
Cast: 2 female, 2 male, 1 percussionist

Time Period: Ancient and Modern

This collection of dramatized folktales is introduced by a character called MC Cat who tells cat jokes and explains each of the stories. Three other cat characters, Meow Mix, Fluff Daddy, and Tomcat Jones, play animal and human characters in each story. The stories include *Puss in Boots*, which takes place in France; *Wildcat and Hyena*, which takes place in Africa; *The Magic Ring*, which takes place in China; and finally *The Cat, the Rooster, and the Lamb*, a story that takes place in Mexico.

This play would be suitable and entertaining for young children. It provides several opportunities for audience involvement, especially during the interactions among the four cat characters. The individual tales are kept short and action packed. The use of a percussionist in the show adds interesting stylistic elements such as the African Drumming in *Wildcat and Hyena* and Peking Opera style in *The Magic Ring*. The script could use some fleshing out; for example, it includes phrases such as "Fluff Daddy improvises a rap," and mentions that the cats will do a rap/dance routine to selected words from Tom Jones' "What's New Pussycat," without further explanation. The script lacks depth that would make it appealing to an older audience.

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



Richards, Chuck. *Critter Sitter*. Illustrated by Chuck Richards. Walker, 2008. ISBN 9780802795953. \$16.99. 32 p.

Reviewer: Tessa McMillan

Reading Level: Primary

Rating: Dependable

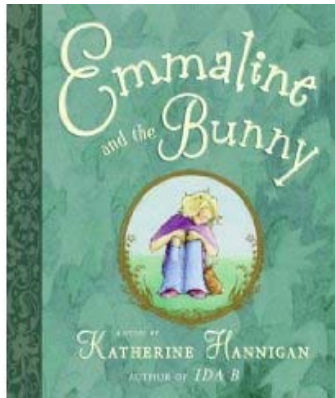
Genre: Picture Books; Contemporary realistic fiction;

Subject: Pets--Juvenile fiction; Pet sitting--Juvenile fiction; Humorous Stories; Books--Reviews;

Henry has just started his new job of babysitting critters. Mr. and Mrs. Mahoney are his first customers. They have a dog, cat, boa constrictor, goldfish, tree-frog, and cockatiel. His job is to make sure that all the Mahoney's animals are taken care of until their return. Along the way, Henry encounters several mishaps with the animals. In the end, Henry works hard at being responsible for the animals and is rewarded by the Mahoney's with another chance to watch their pets--if he wants to go through the challenges again.

Richards creates beautiful and vibrant images with colored pencil and watercolor that compliment the storyline. The story is fairly well written and could be useful in showing children the importance of becoming dependable and taking responsibility for their actions. If readers enjoy the illustrations of Chris Van Allsburg, readers will also enjoy this work of Richards.

Volume 29 no. 4 (March/April 2009)



Hannigan, Katherine. *Emmaline and the Bunny*. Illustrated by Katherine Hannigan. Greenwillow, 2009. ISBN 9780061626548. \$14.99. 94 p.

Reviewer: Marsha D. Broadway

Reading Level: Primary, Intermediate

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Fiction; Fantasy fiction;

Subject: Orderliness--Juvenile fiction; Individuality--Juvenile fiction; Rabbits--Juvenile fiction;

Books--Reviews;

Emmaline is a messy child who lives in Neatasapin, where everything and everyone are too tidy. Emmaline likes to dig in the dirt, splash in puddles, and “scoot-skedaddle” under shrubs. Her parents correct her untidy behavior, and other children refuse play with her. Emmaline is lonely, and she wants a bunny to huddle, cuddle, and snuggle. So begins her quest to find a bunny. To claim the bunny, Emmaline is instructed by the Old One to return home and make an invitation, or an appropriate environment, to welcome the bunny and other wildlife. Emmaline persuades her parents and triumphs over an overbearing mayor.

Hannigan employs double and triple verbs, such as “stamp-stomped” and “thump, thump, thumping;” inverted modifiers, such as “happy, mostly;” and onomatopoeic words, such as “goo-googled” as elements of exaggeration; however, the word play becomes a distraction instead of an enhancement to the storytelling. The theme of individuality is supported by the back story of a town that is too tidy to be green and nature friendly. Hannigan uses watercolors to clearly show how drab the tidy town is and what colorful diversity is added by characters who are individuals, animals that enrich the surroundings, and an environment that is green. The final illustration of a verdant landscape with a wildlife-filled border bears the words, “You Are Invited,” to encourage all readers to be more environmentally conscience. Readers who relished *Ida B* (2004) will find fantastical natural elements but flatter, less-engaging characters in this chapter book.

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

Ross, Kathy. *Earth-Friendly Crafts: Clever Ways to Reuse Everyday Items*. Illustrated by Celine Malepart. Millbrook, 2009. ISBN 9780822590996. \$26.60. 48 p.

Reviewer: Marsha D. Broadway

Reading Level: Primary, Intermediate

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Informational books;

Subject: Handicrafts--Juvenile literature; Recycling (wastes,etc.)--Juvenile literature; Books--Reviews;

Simple, step-by-step instructions for twenty-one craft projects provide materials lists and color photographs of the completed projects. Each craft uses recycled components. From a tiny toy bookmark to a Slinky CD holder, kids not only will be able to make cool craft projects, but also will learn to reuse resources to create something new.

With more than fifty kid-friendly craft books to her credit, Ross has created another easy-to-use, creativity-packed book that will delight young crafters. With its focus on repurposing instead of discarding, *Earth-Friendly Crafts* is a better choice for learning about recycling than her *Every Day Is Earth Day* (Millbrook, 1995). End materials include both text and online resources, "Tips for Kids," and a few statistics about recycling. A brief note from the author encourages children to creatively reuse items instead of throwing them away. The mixed medium illustrations combine color photography, black and white line drawings, colored pencil, and more to add visual excitement and details to the instructions. In home and classroom settings, this book could encourage environmental awareness and resourcefulness.

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



Woods, Mary B. *Seven Wonders of Ancient North America*. Lerner, 2009. ISBN 9780822575726. \$33.26. 80 p.

Reviewer: Meriam Bates

Reading Level: Primary, Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Informational books;

Subject: Indians of North America --Antiquities --Juvenile literature; Indians of Mexico --Antiquities --Juvenile literature; North America --Antiquities --Juvenile literature; Mexico --Antiquities --Juvenile literature; Books--Reviews;

In ancient times, Greek philosophers compiled a list of the greatest wonders of the world known to them. However, the Greeks did not know about the wonderful accomplishments of the people living in North America. Therefore, as a final edition to their Seven Wonders series, Michael and Mary Woods have compiled their list of the wonders of ancient North America. Their choices include Jellyfish Cove, The Iroquois Confederacy, Cahokia, Cliff Palace, the Temple of Inscriptions, Teotihuacán, and Tenochtitlán.

In addition to the detailed descriptions, illustrations, quotations, and fun facts that accompany each achievement, the book also includes resources for further research. These resources include a timeline, a glossary and pronunciation guide, source notes, a bibliography, and further reading and websites. The authentic, accurate, and detailed facts and illustrations, as well as the research resources, make this an excellent study tool for young people who want to learn about any one of the seven wonders featured in the book. However, the many pictures and fun facts scattered throughout the text may also be distracting for the casual reader. The best part of this book is its ability to accurately relate difficult concepts in a way that it is easy for young readers to understand.

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

Topper, Lynda A. *Theatre Games & Activities: Games for Building Confidence and Creativity*. Meriwether, 2008. ISBN 9781566081566. \$17.95. 143 p.

Reviewer: Tessa McMillan

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Informational books; Plays;

Subject: Improvisation (Acting); Books--Reviews;

Teachers searching for new activities to help students express themselves need not fret. *Theatre Games & Activities* provides hundreds of helpful games to get even the shiest students to participate. The book is arranged into theatre games that start at a basic level—introducing students to each other, and move to more challenging drama games—improvising a fantasy scene with a partner. Besides the various dramatic games, *Theatre Games* also includes different writing activities: creating a short play, writing a play review, or taking quizzes over the different jobs at a theatre. At the end of the book, Topper provides evaluations and assessments for grading a student's participation in the various activities.

Topper creates a useful tool for teachers, and possibly parents, who want to use the dramatic arts in their teaching. The activities can be easily tailored to fit any teaching situation or age group. It is a helpful book for teachers who are looking for fresh, updated activities to enliven their lesson plans and to get more of their students involved in the learning process.

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

Beccia, Carlyn. *The Raucous Royals : Test Your Royal Wits : Crack Codes, Solve Mysteries, and Deduce Which Royal Rumors are True*. Illustrated by Carlyn Beccia. Houghton Mifflin Company, 2008. ISBN 9780618891306. \$17.00. 64 p.

Reviewer: Tessa McMillan

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young adult

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Informational books; Biographies;

Subject: Kings and rulers--Miscellaneous--Juvenile literature; Nobility--Biography--Juvenile literature; History--Errors, invention, etc.--Juvenile literature; Books--Reviews;

Was the rumor that Napoleon Bonaparte was really short true? Was Henry VIII so fat that he needed to be carried around by his servants? Was Prince Dracula a real vampire? From her research, Beccia reveals the truth and myths about many other royals who are still gossiped about today. Along with revealing the truth or dispelling lies, this book includes facts about each royal and about the time period they lived in. Also, Beccia explains how some rumors were started by enemies to the crown, members of the court, or even members of the royal's family. Along with the facts and explanations, Beccia provides quizzes, codes, charts, and guessing games to test the readers' knowledge on several of the royal rumors. At the end of the book, Beccia explains how students can create research papers based upon a historical rumor by explaining what steps they need to take in completing their reports.

Beccia uses digital art in creating her illustrations. The pictures are colorful, engaging, and humorous, and they are supplemented by humor in the text. The target audience for this book is junior high ages, yet there are sections that are more adult in content. If a junior high student is having problems with writing a history report, this would be a good book for them to read to get them interested in European history.

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

Brown, Dan. *Let It Begin Here: April 19, 1775: The Day the American Revolution Began*. Illustrated by Dan Brown. Roaring Book Press, 2008. ISBN 9781596432215. \$17.95. 64 p.

Reviewer: Larysa Bordner

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young adult

Rating: Dependable

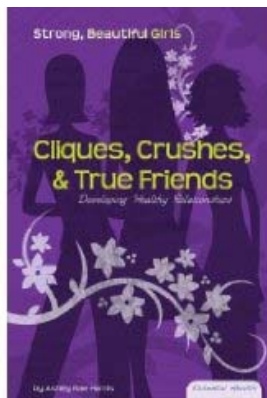
Genre: Informational books; Picture books;

Subject: Lexington, Battle of, Lexington, Mass., 1775 --Juvenile literature; Concord, Battle of, Concord, Mass., 1775--Juvenile literature; Books--Reviews;

The history of the American Revolution is taught in all schools throughout the United States of America. *Let It Begin Here!* tells the beginning of the Revolution in a simple story form. It tells of Paul Revere, the Battle of Concord, and the Battle Lexington. Although the focus of the story is on how the war began, there is a brief explanation of how the war ended and what happened to the people who played major roles in its beginning.

*Let It Begin Here!* provides helpful facts and a basic understanding of the start of the Revolutionary War, but it lacks depth. Throughout the story there are many related quotes from historical figures that enhance the realistic aspect. The pictures are done with watercolor and ink; they fit the simplistic, yet serious subject matter of the book. Some pictures show blood and bullets, but are tastefully non-grotesque. This book would appeal to the "stereo-typical boy" who enjoys war, blood, and "real" stories, but it is also an excellent introduction for any child to learn about the Revolutionary War. Readers should be wary, though, because explanations of how men were killed are included throughout the book. Although the explanations do not go into depth, some readers may find them disturbing.

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



Harris, Ashley Rae. *Cliques, Crushes, & True Friends: Developing Healthy Relationships*. ABDO Publishing Company, 2009. ISBN 9781604530995. \$22.95. 112 p.

Reviewer: Alison Canar

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young adult

Rating: Dependable

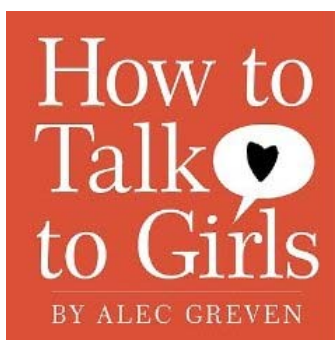
Genre: Informational books;

Subject: Interpersonal relations--Juvenile literature; Teenage girls --Psychology--Juvenile literature; Books--Reviews;

Friendship and dating hold top priority for many middle school girls. During this age of physical change and emotional turmoil, adolescents could use some friendly guidance. *Cliques, Crushes, & True Friends* is part of a series for young women entitled *Strong, Beautiful Girls*. It aims to help girls develop the interpersonal skills to successfully navigate through peer relationships by thinking critically about real-world situations. Included are chapters about different roles one might play in a friendship and a variety of scenarios to consider.

While the majority of the book is written by Harris or “Ashley” as she would like to be known to readers, it also features insights from psychologist Dr. Vicki, founder of the Better Parenting Institute. The end of each chapter contains an analysis from Dr. Vicki, “Get Healthy” tips to learn from the chapter, and a final word from Harris. The book deals with subjects, such as drug use and sexuality, that some parents might not feel comfortable sharing with their young daughters. On the other hand, these are issues that teens will likely face in their peer groups, and the book deals with inoculation techniques such as recognizing when to say no and how to stand up for oneself. Older readers might find the writing style too heavy-handed, but for interested middle school readers, this could be a useful book to foster high-order thinking and social introspection.

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



Greven, Alec. *How talk to girls*. Illustrated by Kei Acedera. HarperCollins, 2008. ISBN 9780061709999. \$9.99. 46 p.

Reviewer: Alison Canar

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young adult;

Rating: Excellent;

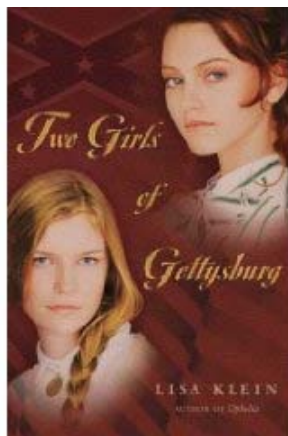
Genre: Information books;

Subject: Boys--Psychology--Juvenile literature; Girls--Psychology--Juvenile literature; Self-esteem in children--Juvenile literature; Interpersonal relations in children--Juvenile literature; Conversation --Juvenile literature; Books--Reviews;

Elementary school can be a tough place to win a girl's heart, but fourth grader, Alex Greven, wants to do what he can to help. In *How to Talk to Girls*, Greven shares the wisdom gathered from his and his classmates' experiences in hopes that other boys might be able to achieve the ultimate dream of "winning victory" with a girl. In order to win victory, boys will have to learn to control their hyperactivity or overcome their shyness so that they can carry on a civilized conversation with a girl. Once a boy does get a girl to like him, he should remember that she may still ditch him within a few weeks. Nonetheless, Greven advises, "life is hard, move on."

Although *How to Talk to Girls* is written from one elementary student to another, it also appeals to older readers. It is a quick read with simple yet charming illustrations and language. One cannot help but smile at Greven's clever tips and analogies. Many useful dating suggestions include waiting until middle school before becoming attached to a girl and realizing that normal girls are often a better choice than troublesome, pretty girls. *How to Talk to Girls* can be a useful guide for youth looking to connect with someone special.

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



Klein, Lisa. *Two Girls of Gettysburg*. Bloomsbury U.S.A., 2008. ISBN 9781599901053. \$16.99. 393 p.

Reviewer: Larysa Bordner;

Reading Level: Young adult;

Rating: Dependable;

Genre: Historical fiction;

Subject: Gettysburg, Battle of Gettysburg, Pa., 1863--Juvenile fiction; United States --History --Civil War, 1861--1865--Juvenile fiction; Friendship--Juvenile fiction; Book--Reviews;

Rosanna and Lizzie may be cousins and best friends, but their looks, personalities, and family situations are vastly different from each other. When the Civil War breaks out, they are both deeply changed by its effects. Lizzie simply wants to go to school with her friends. But when the war breaks out, she ends up running her father's butcher shop and trying to hold her family together. Rosanna wants to be a well-to-do housewife for her sweetheart, but she ends up following him off to war and serving as a nurse. Each girl matures and learns from her experiences during the war, and they vow to take what happened to heart.

Klein does an excellent job of creating realistic characters to fit a well-known historical event. In fact she bases Lizzie on a real person, but not all of the events and people are factual. Klein has a long list of references at the end of the book to show she has researched the material that she bases the book around. Although *Two Girls of Gettysburg* presents a touching and convincing story, it is not something that would seem appropriate for all audiences. The story is told from sixteen-year-old girls' perspectives, but there are sexual references which make the book seem more mature than the audience for which it is intended. However, the book is well written and would be a useful tool in giving teenagers, specifically girls, a lifelike connection to the battle of Gettysburg and the Civil War.

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

McKinley, Robin. *Chalice*. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2008. ISBN 9780399246760. \$18.99. 263 p.

Reviewer: Tessa McMillan

Reading Level: Young adult

Rating: Significant shortcomings

Genre: Adventure stories; Fantasy fiction;

Subject: Fantasy--Juvenile fiction; Bees--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

After the unexpected deaths of the Master and Chalice, Mirasol—a common beekeeper—is thrown into the role of Chalice by taking care of the magical needs of her demesne, Willowlands. But she is not the only new face in the Circle. The new Master is a recently released priest of Fire, who has lost many of his human characteristics. He, like Mirasol, is learning to play his proper part in managing the demesne. However, others in the Circle are unsure of these two new arrivals and make plans to supersede them with announcing an outblood Heir to the Master. It is only when Mirasol and the new Master work together that they can rebuild the Circle and bring harmony to Willowlands.

*Chalice* is a difficult book to read because the story is stagnant in many places and the characters are not well developed. McKinley does a good job at creating a three-dimensional character in Mirasol, but her other characters are ignored in their development. McKinley spends too much time explaining Mirasol's world and not enough time on actual scenes with important characters. But even in her explanations of the fantasy world, McKinley's passages are often confusing and repetitive. This book is intended for young adults, but the characters and issues seem to be directed towards adults.

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



Collins, Suzanne. *The Hunger Games*. Scholastic, 2008. ISBN 9780439023481. \$17.99. 374 p.

Reviewer: Alison Canar;

Reading Level: Young adult;

Rating: Dependable;

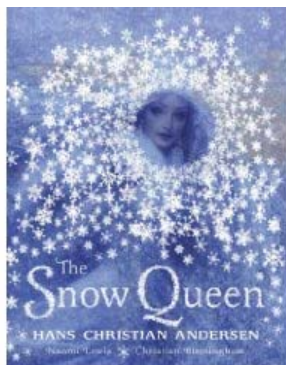
Genre: Adventure stories; Science fiction;

Subject: Survival--Juvenile Fiction; Television Programs--Juvenile Fiction; Contests--Juvenile Fiction;

Imagine if the gladiators' ancient coliseums had the finest technology of the future available to them and the participants in these public displays of violence were children. This is the world of the hunger games. As punishment for past rebellion, districts under the control of the all-powerful capital must sacrifice one boy and one girl for an annual, televised blood-bath. When Katniss Everdeen's younger sister is selected, Katniss doesn't hesitate to take her place. Even though only one tribute should come out alive, the on-screen romance between Katniss and a fellow tribute wins the heart of the audience. Eventually the pair uses their influence to overcome the deadly designs of the capital.

Collins effectively sets the stage for the games. She draws the readers in and leaves them eager to learn what Katniss will face next. However, as Katniss leaves her home town, the story encounters several unfortunate detours. While the battle scenes are gripping, the plot often feels forced. Much of the novel focuses on a love triangle with two missing sides. Katniss never commits herself to either choice. The book leaves the reader with the conclusion of the games, but no resolution of the characters. While the novel is intended to be part of an ongoing series, the pacing still feels off. *The Hunger Games* is a worthwhile exploration of the themes of survival and self-preservation, but struggles with fleshing out the motives of the characters and creating a unified storyline.

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



Andersen, Hans Christian. Retold by Naomi Lewis. *The Snow Queen*. Illustrated by Christian Birmingham. Candlewick Press, 2008. ISBN 9780763632298. \$18.99. 64 p.

Reviewer: Jan Staheli

Reading Level: All;

Rating: Outstanding;

Genre: Fairy tales; Children's picture books;

Subject: Friendship; Winter--Juvenile fiction; Snow Queen (fictitious character); Books--Reviews;

In this classic fairy tale, Kay and Gerda are "not brother and sister, but they were just as fond of each other as if they were." One summer day, Kay is pierced in the heart and eye by the splinters of a demon's mirror. They immediately begin to freeze his heart and cloud his vision to what is good and beautiful. He is taken by the Snow Queen, who kisses him on the forehead. "Her kiss was colder than ice; it went straight to his heart, which was already turning into a lump of ice." When Kay doesn't return, Gerda sets out to find him. Meeting witches, princes, robbers, and snowflake soldiers, she makes her way to the Snow Queen's palace, where she weeps for joy at finding Kay. Her tears melt the lump that is his heart and his own tears wash his eyes clear. They walk home hand-in-hand and discover that they are not young children anymore. As they sit in the sunshine, Grandmother reads to them from the Bible, "Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

The beautifully illustrated, large-format (30 x 26 cm.) picture book might have come straight from the Snow Queen's palace. The board cover is decorated in icy blues and creams, with a clear dust jacket covered with iridescent snow flakes. The story is presented in seven parts, just as Andersen published it in 1845. Lewis' retelling is clear and sweet, with a straight narrative line that carries the reader through the tale. The pastel illustrations are evocative and varied, with a broad color palette from the cool winter blues to bright summer hues. This lovely story can be read as a fairy tale or as an allegory about the various natures of love, especially Christ-like love. With these qualities, the story and its illustrations will be enjoyed by all ages.

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