



2008

Betsy B. Little

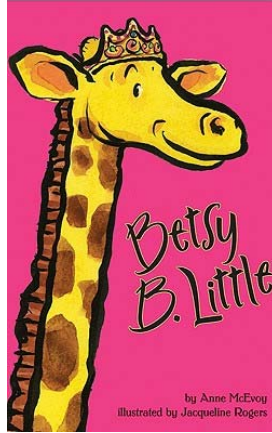
Megan Harris

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McEvoy, Anne. *Betsy B. Little*. Illustrated by Jacqueline Rogers. HarperCollins, 2009. ISBN 9780060593377. \$19.50. 32 p.

Reviewer: Megan Harris

Reading Level: Preschool, Primary

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Picture books; Humorous poetry; Fiction;

Subject: Stories in rhyme--Juvenile fiction; Ballet dancing--Juvenile fiction; Giraffe--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Betsy dreams of becoming a ballerina. The only problem is that she is an eleven-foot tall giraffe. Betsy struggles with everything, from ice skating to fitting in her own bed. When her parents take her to a ballet studio, Betsy's height leads her to a painful, and less than graceful, crash on the ceiling. Overhearing her fellow aspiring ballerinas--and their mothers--say, "the great ballerinas have always been small," Betsy leaves the studio. Instead, she practices ballet alone in the park, where she gains fame by offering outdoor shows. She discovers that the problem is not being too tall, but, "dreaming too small!"

McEvoy tells this tale of perseverance in light-hearted, four-line stanzas, with an ABCB rhyming pattern. Even when dealing with Betsy's height-related struggles, the text remains hopeful. McEvoy includes details such as the way Betsy would "smile away" despite her struggles, and that her "spirits were high" even after leaving the ballet studio. In addition, Rogers' bright, colorful paintings offer support to the text. Using black acrylic paint and watercolors, she fills the book with images of Betsy with friends, loving parents, and a clean, safe neighborhood. These delightful images are not specifically referenced in the text, but are important to the hopeful feeling the book exudes. *Betsy B. Little* is a delightful read for children preschool to early third grade, and would be a great introduction to units on rhyming, poetry, and positive attitudes.

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