



2009

The Word Snoop

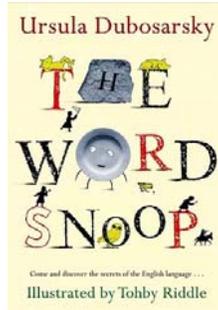
Megan Harris

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Dubosarsky, Ursula. *The Word Snoop*. Illustrated by Tohby Riddle. Dial, 2009. ISBN 9780803734067. \$16.99. 272 p.

Reviewer: Megan Harris

Reading Level: Young adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Informational books;

Subject: English language--History--Juvenile literature; Books--Reviews;

Few have ever heard of a mondegreen, portmanteau, or malapropism—but Dubosarsky's clever "Word Snoop" has. Delightfully illustrated by the Australian cartoonist Tohby Riddle, the mysterious "Snoop" wittily and candidly explains the history and interesting elements of the English language. Snoop explores everything from runes to texting. Each chapter opens with an explanatory letter prepping the readers for what they will learn. Following each chapter is a coded message for the readers to decipher using the knowledge they've gained. A glossary and code key appear in the back of the book as a quick reference for frustrated code-breakers.

Dubosarsky graduated from Sydney University with a degree in English and languages, including Old Icelandic and Latin. Widely recognized as an excellent children's book author in both Australia and the United States, she blends her technical knowledge with her whimsical and witty children's book style to create a delightfully readable book for young adults. Like its Australian counterpart *The Word Spy*, this American publication uses fresh illustrations and a relaxed first-person perspective to convert a traditionally tedious study of history and grammar into a personal exploration of the words we use to build our lives.

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