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When You Wander: A Search-and-Rescue Dog Story

Liz Kazandzhy

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Book Review

**Title:** When You Wander: A Search-and-Rescue Dog Story  
**Author:** Margarita Engle  
**Illustrator:** Mary Morgan  
**Reviewer:** Liz Kazandzhy  
**Publisher:** Henry Holt and Co.  
**Publication Year:** 2013  
**ISBN:** 9780805093124  
**Number of Pages:** 32  
**Interest Level:** Preschool, Primary  
**Rating:** Excellent

Review

What can a search-and-rescue dog do? Just by smelling your things, he can learn all about you! In this story, this special canine tracks down a lost child in the woods, telling the child’s story by his scent as he makes his search. The child eventually holds tight to a big tree and waits until the friendly dog comes to find him and bring him safely home.

Told from the perspective of the rescue dog himself, this book serves several purposes. First, it teaches readers about the amazing capabilities of search-and-rescue dogs (including an interesting fact page in the back), and it especially teaches children to trust these kind of animals instead of fear them, as some children have a tendency to do. Second, it helps children know what to do if they get lost. At first it was confusing why the dog suggested that the child “hug a tree,” but on the fact page at the end of the book, it explains that this simple tactic helps lost children remain in one place while search-and-rescue teams look for them, thus making their search easier. Lastly, the book is also entertaining and engaging, with flowing text and beautiful illustrations. All in all, this book is definitely worth a read for its unique educational lessons and artistic merit.