



2017

# Battlesaurus: Rampage at Waterloo

Axel Trumbo

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### BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Trumbo, Axel (2017) "Battlesaurus: Rampage at Waterloo," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 38 : Iss. 4 , Article 30.  
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol38/iss4/30>

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# Book Review

**Title:** Battlesaurus: Rampage at Waterloo

**Author:** Brian Falkner

**Reviewer:** Axel Trumbo

**Publisher:** Farrar Straus Giroux Books for Young Readers

**Publication Year:** 2015

**ISBN:** 9780374300753

**Number of Pages:** 361

**Interest Level:** Young Adult

**Rating:** Significant Shortcomings



## Review

Battlesaurus is a historical fiction—with a heavy emphasis on fiction. The story is loosely based on the battle of Waterloo, and the author notably attempts to impart knowledge about how things were in 19th-century Europe. But the true focus of the book is an alternate reality in which the world still has dinosaurs, and all the danger and excitement that comes with it. The story begins in a small village and follows a young protagonist, Willem, who aspires to be a magician like his father, who had disappeared long ago, having lost favor with Napoleon. The village is attacked by a giant dinosaur, the likes of which Europe had never seen, and Willem is forced to use a trick he has picked up to tame the smaller “saur” native to Europe. Word spreads of his ability just as Napoleon’s battles reach the village’s doorstep. Napoleon has all but won the war due to the importation of giant dinosaurs from the Americas, and their use in battle. Willem knows he must travel to England to share his skills to stop the conquest of a tyrant. This leads to a cat-and-mouse game between Willem and Napoleon’s goons, leading to a narrow escape, and a lot of carnage along the way.

This book should be better than it is. The story includes love interests, secret betrayals by close friends, large-scale battles, and tense struggles against flesh-eating dinosaurs. But the book struggles with its pacing and with a consistent voice. Not much occurs during the first half of the book, which drags quite a bit, and then suddenly the story turns into a constant blood bath that seems a little much. And the language employed by the author is inconsistent. At times the dialogue is stiff and formal, with strange sayings that don’t seem to fit the 19th century setting, and at others times it is casual and modern. But looking past these flaws, a young reader will learn about the time period, and enjoy dinosaur violence as a bonus.

\*Contains warrelated violence.