



2017

Choke

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Book Review

Title: Choke

Author: Diana Lopez

Reviewer: Lisa Packard

Publisher: Scholastic Press

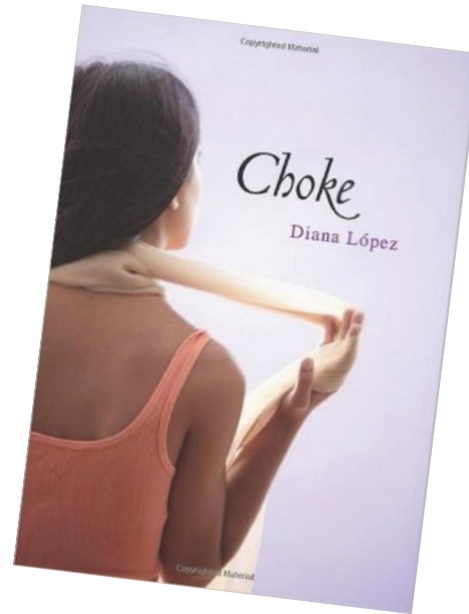
Publication Year: 2012

ISBN: 9780545418225

Number of Pages: 230

Interest Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Outstanding



Review

Windy wants to be one of the in-crowd girls at school. Her dream comes true when Nina, the cool new girl, talks to Windy! Since Nina is paying attention to Windy, all the other in-crowd girls have become her friends. Windy has never been happier as she finally gets to be with the cool kids. But as she gets to know them better, Windy realizes they aren't all what she thought they were, and Nina has a new game to play to become "breath sisters." You have to choke someone until they pass out, and when you wake up it's like you're on cloud nine. Windy isn't sure she wants to play the game—it could be very dangerous. One day Nina doesn't come to school because she went too far playing the choking game and now has severe brain damage. Windy sees that being in the in-crowd isn't everything and goes back to being her normal happy self. She eventually goes to visit Nina to show her that she still has friends who care about her, even if she isn't popular anymore.

Lopez brings forward a wonderful book not only for those struggling to fit in, but one to bring awareness about dangerous games people play to fit in or get high. Windy is like any typical teenager in school, not cool or popular. She's a regular kid struggling to pass classes who wants to know what it's like to be one of the in-crowd. Windy grows in this book as she musters the confidence to stand up for herself against her bullies and Nina playing the choking game. Teenage readers can benefit from the lessons that Windy learns like being happy with the friends who care about you, loving yourself, and not focusing on material things. Lopez does a wonderful job of exposing the dangers of games. She brings to light not only different names of the choking game, but the signs of it. Lopez addresses the reality of what can happen if someone were to go too far with the game, just as Nina does. This is a great book for teens and even preteens as they face social pressures from the wrong group of people. Parents and teachers can also gain an awareness of the realities of bullying that children and teens face.

*Contains mild violence.