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# Making Friends with Billy Wong

Phyllis Rosen

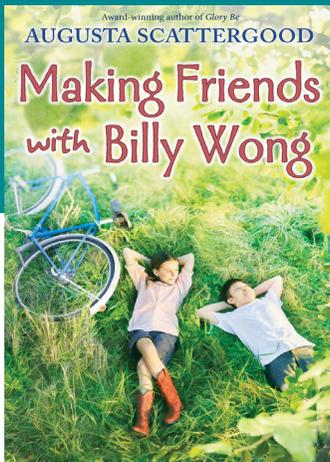
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## Book Review

# Making Friends with Billy Wong

### Author

Augusta Scattergood

### Illustrator

NA

### Reviewer

Phyllis Rosen

### Rating

Outstanding

### Level

Intermediate, Young  
Adult

### Pages

209

### Year

2016

### Publisher

Scholastic Press/New

### ISBN

9780545924252

Azelea is dropped off by her mother to look after her Grandma Clark for the summer. Grandma hurt her ankle and needs help with her house and especially with her garden. She has three other children who come in weekly to help with the garden. One is a Chinese American named Billy Wong, one a troubled boy named Willis, and one a gossipy, dressed-to-the-nines girl named Melinda. Azelea learns that appearances are not always what they seem. She gradually becomes friends with Billy, and learns that being in Arkansas for the summer might not be so bad after all.

The characters in the book are developed well. Readers get to know Grandma not only by her words, but by her facial expressions. Readers learn that Willis might be troubled and acting out because he's carrying a heavy load on his shoulders that no one is aware of. Azelea begins to discover that she likes new things and can talk to strangers after all. The pace of the book is fast. Each chapter leads to the next in such a way that it's hard to put the book down. The chapters are written from two points of view: Azelea's and Billy Wong's. Through this method, readers learn the thoughts and dilemmas these two are facing and how difficult it is to make decisions and to live in certain circumstances. It's a great book for helping readers learn that people are not all good or all bad, but have troubles and problems that lead to behaviors.