



2018

Sarah, Plain and Tall

Bailey Ondricek

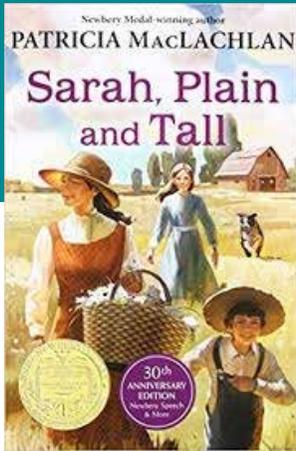
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Book Review

Sarah, Plain and Tall

Author

Patricia MacLachlan

Illustrator

Reviewer

Bailey Ondricek

Rating

Excellent

Level

Primary, Intermediate

Pages

76

Year

2013

Publisher

Harper Collins

ISBN

9781626726079

Anna's mother died the day after giving birth to Caleb. It has been years now since that day, but Caleb, Anna, and Papa have missed her dearly and are looking for a new mother to come to their home. Sarah, who describes herself as 'plain and tall,' replies back to Papa's letter inquiring as to whether she might consider moving to the prairie to marry him. She is excited to meet the small family and see if she fits in. Caleb and Anna wonder about Sarah and worry with every event whether she will choose to stay or return back to her mysterious life by the sea.

This short chapter book is written from Anna's perspective. She is candid about her feelings toward Caleb in relation to their mother dying, what it is to be a young woman growing up without a mother, and so on. The relatable nature of this narrative is very endearing, even though the setting for the text is very unlike modern experience. The chapters are only a few pages long which helps young readers to see progress in a short amount of time. While young children may not entirely understand the concept of the mail-order bride, they do become attached to these four endearing characters. The voice of each character is very strong and the characters are brought to life with each page. The literary quality of this book is well-deserving of its Newbery Medal. This is a good option for historical fiction appropriate for young children.