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Boy's Best Friend

Cynthia Frazier

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Book Review

Boy's Best Friend

Author

Kate Banks and Rupert

Illustrator

Reviewer

Cynthia Frazier

Rating

Excellent

Level

Primary, Intermediate

Pages

213

Year

2015

Publisher

Farrar Straus Giroux

ISBN

9780374380083

'Moving is fun and change can be positive.' No matter how many times Lester says that mantra to himself, it doesn't help. He still misses Colorado, his old neighborhood, and his friends. Everything is different in Cape Cod, even the water and air are different. His only friend is his golden retriever, Bill Gates. On the other hand, a classmate George, who has lived in Cape Cod all his life, is missing his very best and oldest friend who just moved to another state. He feels that the only real friend he has left is his border collie, Bart. Finding many similarities, particularly thinking that their dogs are the 'smartest dog in the world,' they start a shared science project, measuring how often and when each dog starts waiting for his master to come home, for the school Science Fair. George starts emailing a scientist, Dr. Sheldrake, who has written a book on this topic and he corresponds back with ideas and advice. George and Lester learn a lot about animal behavior, the scientific method, and friendship.

Kate Banks has written many books for children and young adults however, this book was co-written by Dr. Rupert Sheldrake, the author of a book for adults, *Dogs That Know When their Owners Are Coming Home*. This juvenile book is a fictional account of an animal behavior experiment that could possibly be done for a real science project. Science teachers might want to request that this book be added to their school library as it explains the scientific method in a fun understandable way. The characters are believable as they deal with the normal middle school boy issues of making friends in a new school, missing old friends, fitting in and coping with changes. The book is a good length for an elementary school reader and the plot is appealing. Though there is an animal death involved, it is handled in a compassionate manner. This book would be attractive to boys nine to twelve-years-old who like dogs and are interested in science.