



2018

The Thing About Luck

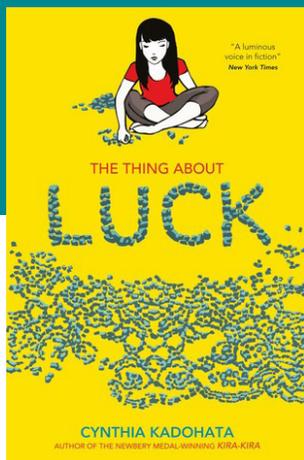
Amanda Bishop

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Book Review

The Thing About Luck

Author

Cynthia Kadohata

Illustrator

Reviewer

Amanda Bishop

Rating

Dependable

Level

Intermediate, Young
Adult

Pages

304

Year

2014

Publisher

Atheneum Books for

ISBN

9781442474659

Breaks from school are supposed to be fun, but for Summer it means traveling with her family as wheat harvesters across the country. Summer's parents are in Japan dealing with a family emergency, so it's just Summer, her grandparents, her brother Jaz, and her dog Thunder this harvest season. Summer is hoping that the family's year of bad luck will soon come to an end, but before anything gets better, things are going to get worse. Both of her grandparents are dealing with sickness, her brother struggles with trying to fit in, and Summer is trying to keep everything together so that they can earn enough money to save their house. Summer finds her own personal strength and is able to use all of the knowledge and skills she has learned to help the crew complete their job so that her grandparents won't be fired.

The Thing About Luck is a touching and emotional story about what it means to find your inner strength and to fight for your family. Cross-cultural differences between the American-raised children and their strict Japanese grandparents are at the core of the novel. This struggle is what drives Summer's internal conflict in how she should act versus what she thinks and wants to do. The main character's internal thoughts and desires are the main language through which this story is told, and the reader is drawn into her life. In addition to complex and relatable characters, the author put in a tremendous amount of research into wheat harvesting, and this is evident in how the machines and the process is described throughout the book. Details such as this truly bring the story to life and connect the reader with the strains of migratory farming and the families who do this work.