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The First Rule of Punk

Amanda Bishop

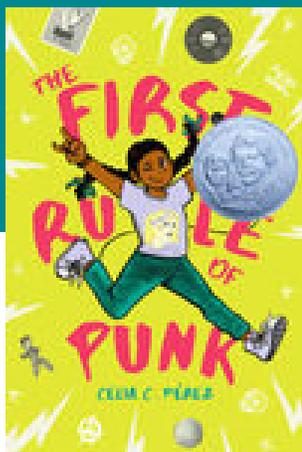
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Book Review

The First Rule of Punk

Author

Celia C Perez

Illustrator

Reviewer

Amanda Bishop

Rating

Outstanding

Level

Intermediate, Young
Adult

Pages

336

Year

2017

Publisher

Viking Books for Young

ISBN

9780425290408

Malú is moving away from her home of Florida to live with her mom in Chicago and leaving behind her record shop-owning, punk rock father. At least Malú has her creativity for making zines to help her navigate the journey. Malú often feels confused about her identity. She refers to her mother as “SuperMexican” because she is always trying to transform rebellious punk Malú into a perfect Mexican señorita. But Malú knows exactly who she wants to be, even if that means she doesn’t always fit into her mom’s vision or how her new classmates will view her. Malú befriends the funky local coffee shop owner’s kid and convinces him to start a punk band with her for the school’s talent show, all behind her mother’s back. But when the school decides that the punk band doesn’t fit in with “classic” Mexican traditions, they decide to throw their own talent show. She impresses her “SuperMexican” mother by integrating classic Mexican ranchera music into punk rock style while discovering her identity and what it means to be punk.

The First Rule of Punk is an authentic and wonderful story about a young girl trying to navigate her identity as she tries to make a home in a new place. Malú is a relatable character with whom readers will forge a connection with from the beginning. She has a spunky and lovable personality that is truly reflected through the author’s writing. The book contains representations of Malú’s zines (short, free magazines created on a specific topic) that she creates and they connect the reader to the inner thoughts of her mind and her emotions. There is an honest exploration of what it means to be Mexican-American and how to navigate fitting into two cultures as well as your parents’ expectations. This book is for anyone who ever felt like they were the oddball of their school or family, or anyone who has ever been conflicted about their identity. This is an inspirational book that challenges you to be yourself and to stand up for what you believe in.