



2018

# The Last Fifth Grade of Emerson Elementary

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### BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Patton, Emma (2018) "The Last Fifth Grade of Emerson Elementary," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 39 : Iss. 9 , Article 69.  
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol39/iss9/69>

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## Book Review

# The Last Fifth Grade of Emerson Elementary

### Author

Laura Shovan

### Illustrator

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### Reviewer

Emma Patton

### Rating

Dependable

### Level

Primary, Intermediate

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### Pages

246

### Year

2016

### Publisher

Wendy Lamb Books

### ISBN

9780553521375

Emerson Elementary is closing, which makes this the last group of fifth graders in Emerson Elementary history. Through poems that their teacher asks them to write throughout the year, the students in Ms. Hill's fifth grade share who they are and what they care about. Some write only about the basics: their likes and dislikes or the interaction they have with other students in the class. But others find themselves struggling with much deeper issues and use poetry to express and work through some of their deepest vulnerabilities. As the students approach a time of change in their life, they are forced to learn how to use their voices in whatever form they can to speak about what matters to them. Even if their voices can't create the change that they expect or want to see, it doesn't mean that they can't make change happen.

The Last Fifth Grade of Emerson Elementary is a unique read in that the book is a collection of poems that fictional students write through their last year of elementary school. For this reason, there is no single plotline, but each student does make their own personal journey through the school year. To assist the reader in keeping track of the students in the class, the name and picture of the student author are attached to each poem. Amazingly, just based on the poems, a reader can see the students grow as writers and as people through the school year as they develop their relationships with their family, the other kids in the class, and themselves. Also, if a reader is interested in writing poetry after reading the book, the author includes tips for writing poetry in the back of the book, including descriptions of different types of poems with examples from the book as well as poetry prompts from Ms. Hill's prompt jar to get them started writing.