



2018

# Armstrong & Charlie

Katie Irion

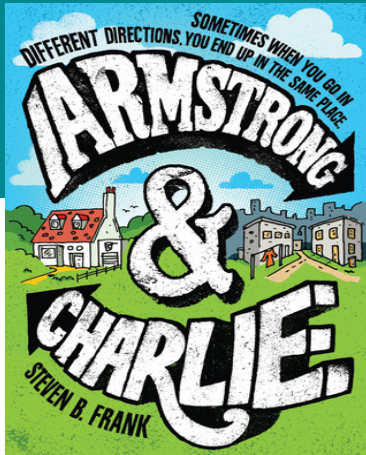
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## Book Review

# Armstrong & Charlie

### Author

Steven B. Frank

### Illustrator

### Reviewer

Katie Irion

### Rating

Excellent

### Level

Intermediate

### Pages

295

### Year

2017

### Publisher

Houghton Mifflin

### ISBN

9780544826083

Armstrong and his friends start school at Charlie's elementary school. They are the first African Americans to attend the school, and their presence causes quite a stir. A handful of Charlie's friends no longer go to the school because of the integration. It is not easy for any of the students, and after a few incidents on the playground, Charlie and Armstrong do not consider themselves friends. When an outdoor camp forces the boys to stay together, however, they find that they may have more in common than they originally thought, and after being roommates at camp they discover that their similarities are greater than their differences. The boys cultivate a friendship that is filled with laughter and happiness, and by graduation both are so happy that their world was shifted when their lives collided.

Steven B. Frank's coming-of-age novel is a lovely narrative about friendship, prejudice, grief, and growing up. Frank does a wonderful job of crafting dynamic characters who go through a multitude of emotions, experiences, and thoughts that lead them to be different, better people when the book ends. Both Armstrong and Charlie are suffering not only in school but in their home lives as well, and readers will be able to relate to the emotions that both boys live through. The boys are extremely relatable and worth rooting for. Frank also does a good job of writing the narrative. The plot moves quickly and there is enough action to keep young readers interested and engaged. Overall, this is a terrific story about overcoming prejudices and finding oneself.