



2019

The Field Guide to the North American Teenager

Amanda Bishop

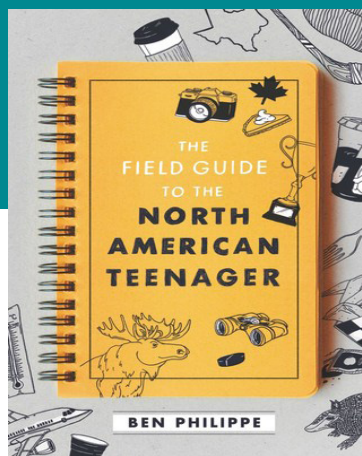
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Book Review

The Field Guide to the North American Teenager

Author

Ben Philippe

Illustrator

Reviewer

Amanda Bishop

Rating

Excellent

Level

Young Adult

Pages

384

Year

2019

Publisher

Balzer + Bray

ISBN

9780062824110

Norris Kaplan isn't pleased with his new living situation. He is forced to move to miserably hot Austin, Texas, from his beloved Montreal, Canada (and ice hockey), after his mother finds a new job. To make matters worse, Norris' father has a new wife and baby, which doesn't leave much time for him. Norris isn't quick to fit in with others because of his sarcastic approach to other teenagers, especially the typical American teenager he knows from films. But people are not always who you assume them to be. Norris's abrasive personality makes him hard to like, especially when he thinks he is better than everyone else, but life is full of lessons and Norris learns through the encounters of his classmates, his parents, and his crush that opening up and being honest might just be in his best interest.

The Field Guide to the North American Teenager is a sarcastic, witty, and touching reflection about being a teenager in North America. Ben Philippe has created in Norris a wonderful and realistic character that many readers will enjoy, even if they may not always like him—and they will definitely not always like him. Norris will frustrate and confound many readers, but like Norris discovers, there are more to people than you originally think. It's refreshing to read a young adult novel that focuses on the complex emotions of growing up as a teenage boy, especially one who is black and an immigrant. This definitely fills a gap in young adult literature. This is a true coming-of-age tale and readers will love following the mishaps and successes of the main character as well as the wonderful supporting characters. Overall, this is an enjoyable read and would be a welcome addition to any young adult library.

*Contains mild substance abuse, mild language, and mild sexual content.