



2019

Wishtree

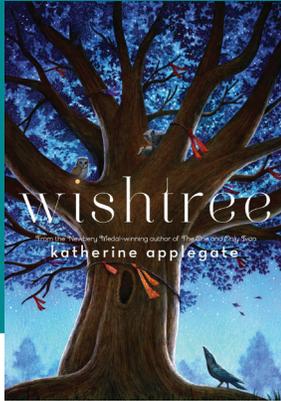
Aubrey Parry

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Book Review

Wishtree

Author

Katherine Applegate

Reviewer

Aubrey Parry

Rating

Outstanding

Level

Intermediate

Pages

211

Year

2017

ISBN

9781250306869

Publisher

Feiwel and Friends an imprint of Macmillan Publishing Group, LLC

Red, a big oak tree, shares its experiences when 10-year-old Samar and her family move into one of the houses right next to it. Samar is a quiet Muslim girl who enjoys coming to sit by Red every night, and Red likewise enjoys her company, which is rare for a tree. One day, however, a mysterious boy carves the word “leave” in Red’s trunk. Red describes how many people assume it was directed toward Samar’s family. So when Samar leaves a wish for a friend on Red’s branches, he feels compelled to help her get her wish. Eventually Red succeeds in helping Samar find a friend, teaching the community all about acceptance and learning to love others who may be different from them.

Applegate approaches some difficult topics in writing about an immigrant of a different religion. As such, Wishtree is especially relevant for society today as the world becomes more diverse. Wishtree is a great novel for beginning middle-grade readers. With its simple language, readers can focus on the important subject without being overwhelmed by vocabulary. Parents and teachers can use this novel to introduce children to these ideas in a setting where they can feel comfortable asking questions. Wishtree shows how judging people before getting to know them can harm both those being judged and those judging. Applegate is able to impart more wisdom by using Red as the main character, as readers can look at the events through a more omnipresent neutral view of life than a human character might have been able to offer. Applegate also sets the story in a typical neighborhood that most people can connect with, making the story applicable to everyone. Wishtree can also be used for anyone simply looking for a good book to read, since the style and plot are engaging and inclusive of any reading level.