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My First Ballet Book

AnnMarie Hamar

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Reviewer: AnnMarie Hamar  
Reading Level: Primary  
Rating: Dependable  
Genre: Informational books;  
Subject: Ballet--Juvenile literature; Books--Reviews;

*My First Ballet Book* covers the usual information found in most introductions to the subject. Author Kate Castle covers a variety of topics ranging from the structure of a typical class to how to choreograph your own ballet. Surprisingly, she says next to nothing about the role music plays in this art form. The arrangement of information is nice: Castle begins by explaining what ballet is, then builds on this by showing in word and pictures how young dancers train and can eventually become professional performers. The text is very simple and straightforward. Each section has a "top tip" box containing information relevant to the topic being discussed, such as the use of French terms in ballet. There are plenty of color photographs, most featuring students from The West London School of Dance and The English National Ballet School. The fact that the author has chosen illustrations that focus on young dancers will likely increase the book's appeal to young readers. Castle, a former dancer with The Royal Ballet, gives good, accurate information. While there is nothing extraordinary about this book, budding young dancers will probably enjoy it.