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Hot Diggity Dogs

Liz Kazandzhy

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Title: Hot Diggity Dogs
Author: Stephanie Calmenson and Joanna Cole
Illustrator: Heather Ross
Reviewer: Liz Kazandzhy
Publisher: Henry Holt and Co. (BYR)
Publication Year: 2015
ISBN: 9780805096491
Number of Pages: 112
Interest Level: Primary, Intermediate
Rating: Excellent

Review

Kate and Lucie are no ordinary girls... nor ordinary dogs! After buying special necklaces at a thrift shop, they realize that they can transform into dogs together with just the clap of a high-five. The book begins with them exploring the city as dogs, ordering “Hot Diggity Dog” hot dogs as girls, then playing at the park as dogs again. Soon they discover that the hot dog stand owners’ dogs, Ketchup and Mustard, have gone missing, and they join the community in searching, transforming between being human and canine depending on what’s most convenient. Once Ketchup and Mustard are safely retrieved, Kate and Lucie then participate in the city dog fair, helping out their peers Danny and DJ by winning prizes for dog obedience. At the end of the book, the authors have also included a few pages with jokes and fun facts about dachshunds, the featured breed in this book.

Hot Diggity Dogs would make for a great addition to a child’s library, especially for young readers who are beginning to enjoy chapter books. The plot provides just enough complexity to make the story interesting, but still very understandable and easy to follow. Throughout the book are also helpful facts about dogs (e.g., how to pet them in public) and activities that the reader can try (e.g., making dog treats, putting up “Lost” signs when an animal goes missing). If adults and children are reading together, the adult can find many opportunities to ask questions related to the text that can expand the child’s understanding and vocabulary. Overall, this is a fun, enjoyable read that appeals to children’s imagination and love for animals.