

12-1-1997

Children's Literature: What's on the Horizons

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Recommended Citation

Freedman, L. (1997). Children's Literature: What's on the Horizons. *Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts*, 38 (2). Retrieved from https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/reading_horizons/vol38/iss2/6

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**Lauren Freedman
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Bailey, Linda. 1997. *What a Daring Detective Like Me Doing in the Doghouse*. Morton Grove IL: Albert Whitman & Company, \$4.50 pb. ISBN: 0-8075-8835-3. 185 pp.

This is another case in the Stevie Diamond Mystery series. In this book, Stevie Diamond and her partner, Jesse Kulniki set out to discover the identity of the prankster who has kidnapped the president's dog while he is visiting Vancouver from the United States. It is Jesse who realizes they must find the prankster as they have found the dog and it now looks like they are the kidnappers. Linda Bailey writes with wit and humor. Her characters are interesting and unusual and the interactions between and among them are immensely entertaining. The plot is well developed and keeps the reader guessing right along with Stevie and Jesse.

Smith, Mark. 1997. *Pay Attention, Slosh*. Illustrated by Gail Piazza. Morton Grove IL: Albert Whitman & Company. ISBN: 0-8075-6378-1. 54 pp.

Josh is eight years old and can't seem to concentrate or stay still for any length of time. He is troubled by this and often wonders what's wrong with him which leaves him feeling angry and frustrated. Consequently, he has problems at school with both the teacher and some of his peers who call him "Slosh," a nickname he hates. Finally, his parents decide to get some help. Working with a doctor, they use a combination of positive rewards and medicine to help Josh regulate his behavior. Josh's story is well told and would be a good resource for children with ADHD and children who have friends and classmates with ADHD.

Mastoon, Adam. 1997. *The Shared Heart: Portraits and Stories Celebrating Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Young People*. NY: William Morrow & Company, \$25.00 hb. ISBN: 0-688-14931-6. 87 pp.

A beautiful and moving combination of photography and narrative, this book gives voice to the experiences of 40 lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth ranging in age from 16 to 23. The narratives are told in both typeset print and the original handwriting of each of the young people. Taken together the portraits form a pluralistic representation of male and female as well as a variety of ethnic groups while maintaining the individual lived experiences of each person. This is a book which should be shared widely both in and out of classrooms as it will open minds and hearts to both the uniqueness of each of these young people and the similarities they share with all young people.

The Shared Heart also includes at the end a bibliography of resources which offer information and materials about and for gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth. The list is by no means exhaustive, rather it provides a starting point.

Stevens, Diane. 1997. *Liza's Star Wish*. NY: Greenwillow Books, \$15.00 hb. ISBN: 0-688-15310-0. 183 pp.

In this sequel to *Liza's Blue Moon*, Liza's best friend Chloe has moved to Houston from San Antonio and Liza goes to Rockport to spend the summer with her Grandmother, Mama Lacy who is loud and bossy. Liza leaves behind her boyfriend, Forrest with whom she communicates via E-mail, but it's not the same. She makes friends with a girl named Paz who invites her to go to Mexico. Then, Chloe comes to visit and accuses Liza of not being the same. Liza has to deal with a lot during this summer in terms of her relationships not only with Chloe, Forrest and Paz, but also with her mom, dad and of course, Mama Lacy. Liza narrates the story and does so with humor and perceptiveness. She is a character that will bring the reader into her world and not only share her struggles but also her strength and wisdom as well.