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Marla Frazee

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When James and Eamon go to a week of Nature Camp and stay at Eamon's grandparents' house, it turns out that their free time spent staying inside, eating waffles, and playing video games is *way* more interesting than nature. But sometimes things work out best when they *don't* go exactly as planned.

This Caldecott Honor-winning book is a moving and hilarious celebration of young boys, childhood friendships, and the power of the imagination, where Marla Frazee captures the very essence of summer vacation and what it means to be a kid.

A Couple of Boys Have the Best Week Ever Details

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Author : Marla Frazee

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From Reader Review A Couple of Boys Have the Best Week Ever for online ebook

Alex (not a dude) Baugh says

This is a delightful tongue in cheek picture book about two friends, James and Eamon, who are signed up for a week at Nature Camp and who will be staying with Eamon's grandparents Bill and Pam during camp. Bill is a real nature lover whose biggest desire is to go to Antarctica, but try as he might, he just can't get "Jamon" (as he called the boys) interested beyond the coffee ice-cream icebergs with hard chocolate sauce on top that Pam gives them to eat. And when Bill invites Jamon to see a penguin exhibit, the boys opt for quiet meditation in front of video games in the basement. Careful readers will soon notice that all the text and illustrations plus speech balloons tell two different stories. The title of this book, A Couple of Boys Have the Best Week Ever, may seem rather ironic, but once camp is over and the boys have so free time, they decide to do something especially for Bill, so may the title isn't so off-base after all. Complimenting the story are Frazee's humorous illustrations that really brings out the boy's close friendship, their energy, their interests and disinterests, all of which will probably remind you a of few boys you may know. It is also a wonderful intergenerational story that I suspect all elicit a chuckle or two from grandparents recognize themselves in Pam and Bill.

Anna Lawrence says

Personal Reaction:

This book was very creative and that's what I really enjoyed about it! I liked the irony of James and Eamon being at outdoors camp and how they rarely experienced being outside and enjoying it. One thing I thought was funny was how brutally honest they were (especially to Bill!) and they told him if they didn't want to do something or how they truly felt about it. Thinking back to when I was that age, even if I didn't like something I would have lied and said I liked it or didn't care so I liked how honest they were about the whole week! It also reminded me of when I went to camp as a kid so I also really liked that aspect of it, even if "Jamon" didn't!

Purposes:

-1st and 2nd grade reading level

Read Aloud Enrichment: for enjoyment as well as outdoor educational purposes

-If the classroom is going on a hiking field-trip or learning about Antarctica and penguins, this would be a good introduction book that could get them thinking about possible connections; ask the students if they have ever had an experience like James and Eamon's with Bill and Pam. Ask them if they have anyone like Bill and Pam (grandparents) in their life that would/have done this with them before.

Curriculum:

-Strong vocabulary: fascinating, preferred, meditation, recapped

-Introduce a minor form of sarcasm to the classroom; throughout the book, there was sarcasm shown through the written text and the illustrations that corresponded with it.

Susan says

I gave this book another try after listening to the discussion about it at the ALA Notable Committee. And I've got to say, I'm a convert... so I'm changing my star rating of this one.

I'm starting to come to the conclusion that I'm the only person in the world who didn't like this book. I found it confusing (not good in a picture book) and it took me a few tries to get through it. I think this is one of those books that is really written for adults, and not for 4-6 year olds.

It's hard for me to say this because I love Marla Frazee's books, and I really, truly wanted to like this one but it just didn't work for me. But, I keep reading glowing reviews of it and was quite surprised to see a starred review of it in School Library Journal. I feel really strange writing something negative, because it's in contrast to the opinions of so many other people I respect.

In all fairness, I read this book in a huge stack of books the night before a meeting with a publisher, so maybe I need to give it another shot.

babyhippoface says

Kids will like this one. Adults, eh. Not so much. Which is fine, because it isn't for adults, after all. But even conceding that point, there are still Marla Frazee's illustrations, and who needs more than that?

Plus, anyone who has ever planned for children some activities you think are fun and educational, only to have the kids opt out to stay home and wrestle, will identify with poor Bill. But he keeps trying, bless his heart....

Laura Rumohr says

Summary:

A Couple of Boys Have the Best Week Ever is a picture book written for students in grades 2-5. The book was written with various amounts of text on each page along with character dialogue that contributes to the importance of the story. The story begins as 2 boys go away from home to stay with Eamon's (one of the boys) grandparents during a week of Nature Camp. When they get to the grandparents house (Bill and Pam) the boys enjoy spending time with them. They eat peanut butter and honey sandwiches, banana pancakes, etc. After their first day of camp the boys come home and just enjoy spending time together. They eat, watch tv, and play on an air mattress. After a full week of truly enjoying each others company, they realize they've run out of things to do inside the house and venture outdoors. This is the first time they truly enjoy nature, and it ends up being the best thing they do all week. You'll have to read to see what they do!

Review:

I thought Marla Frazee did a wonderful job creating illustrations that reflected the personalities of the character's in the story. She created characters that many children can relate to because it's a story about friendship and a relationship with grandparents. I especially liked the story because it reminded me of when I would go and visit my grandparents. When I would visit them there would be very few rules, and I could do what I wanted. These boys seemed to have the freedom to just enjoy their week! Some students might also

be able to connect to the setting as being a vacation spot, however, many of my students have never seen the beach and therefore might have trouble relating to that aspect of the story. I would love to read this story to elementary students because I think they'd have fun imagining what they would do to have the best week ever.

Roxanne Hsu Feldman says

One Librarian Had the Best Reading Experience Ever with this wonderful title.

It is what I thought of as a quintessential American picture book -- it is about summer camp, spending time with your best buddy, by the beach, with someone's grandparents, having a great time doing all sorts of stuff and some mischief under the grown-ups' noses. But more over, it is a picture book that NEEDS to be read WITH the pictures. I'm not saying that all picture books should do what the author/illustrator have done here -- if all picture books are telling "two stories" with texts and pictures, then this one addition will be quite boring. This story and concept, however, begs the sarcastic discrepancies done so perfectly here. I see it as a picture book for children who can read very comfortably on their own - and should have no trouble seeing the humor in each scene. It was just named an honor book in the picture book category of the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award. Well deserved! (The winner is Jonathan Bean's *At Night*.)

Kennytanners says

This nostalgic tale captures the transitional mind set of two young boys from the suburbs, Eamon and James who find themselves falling into their usual routine of video games and television while at a grandparents beach house for a week but on the last evening unexpectedly they experience adventures and new found joy from using their imagination and a few sea shells they create a magical moment that most readers are able to connect with. It was a fun page turner with whole lot humor. It was exciting to follow these boys around there grand parent's beach house and watch the planning of a perfect trip fall into the real expectations of a summer vacation which as a child is not to be enlightened but to just to have fun. Marla Frazee must have been inspired by two little boys close to her heart to write such a great summer vacation book. It really brought back the memories of being a care free boy on a trip with a childhood best friend. It felt as if Marla Frazee had turned every boys memory into a light comic book type cartoon. I feel that most people can find a way to relate to these two boys Eamon and James. This book is an innocent reminder of lifes simple joys and it speaks to us to make time in our structured lives to step outside our comfort zones and create a memory.

Maggie Hahn says

A Couple of Boys Have the Best Week Ever is about two friends, James and Eamon, who join together to attend Nature Camp for a week. They are staying at Eamon's grandparents house and are driven to camp each morning, only to discover that their nature camp isn't as nature-y as suspected. The grandfather (Bill) tries to instill his love for nature, especially Antarctica, on the boys. James and Eamon do everything together all week, during and after camp. The boys' week quickly comes to an end, but first their last night occurs where they make the best memory of all! They rmake a scene from Antarctica out of clam shells and rocks, much to Bill's surprise. This book was very fun to read. It included amazing pictures that grabbed my attention. There was also some light humor throughout the book, which made it even better to read. The book included good

vocabulary for children and could be used as a read aloud or independent reading. This book was non-fiction, the author states that everything in the book actually happened. Marla Frazee wrote that she based this book off real people and real events, which makes it non-fiction. The setting in this story wasn't described as much as it was shown. The illustrations were really well done and made the story come to life. The author used good characterization of the two boys, also through the pictures as well as the writing. The characters seemed like real people, even people that the children reading the book could be friends with. This book would be a great addition to my classroom library. There is a fun arts project that would coordinate really well with this book, re-creating the Isat scene. I could also use it at the beginning of a science lesson, if we are talking about nature or Antarctica.

Kaitlin McDonough says

The illustrations of this book feel like a comic book. The book and a lot of jokes and comedy included that elementary students would love. This book would be a good read a loud book in first, second, or third grade right before summer break starts and then the students could tell the class what they plan on doing during their summer break. Kids will love this book because it is something that they can relate to. The book follows two best friends and their adventures throughout their stay and adventures at nature camp. What is ironic about this book is that the two main characters, although they are at nature camp, rarely go outside. The book has a pure fun feel to it which is sure to help younger students enjoy reading. I would suggest this book to younger readers who haven't yet discovered the types of books that they enjoy because the pictures and story are fun and interesting. This book would be one that a lot of students would enjoy because it is so fun and light hearted. The illustrations are fun to look at as well because they seem to be outside of the lines of the book. The illustrations kind of run all over the page which makes you want to keep reading to find out what kinds of trouble the boys get into next.

This book also touches on the idea of friendship and best friends. This would be a great book to help students learn about friendship. A fun way to incorporate this book in the classroom would be for groups of students, or friends, read this book together.

Debbie Reiber says

A Couple of Boys Have the Best Week Ever by Marla Frazee is a contemporary realistic fiction book. The book was a Randolph Caldecott honor book in 2009. The age group this book is intended for is primary to intermediate. The book is about two friends going to a nature summer camp. They weren't too impressed with the camp, but they had a great time being together the whole week.

I enjoyed the book, but I felt it was written with a little bit of humor and contradictions that would be over a child's head. I feel like the theme looked at the situation of children not willing to go outside. The plot was how the boys were attending a nature camp, but they just wanted to do everything inside. On the last day, they did go outside and they used their imagination and enjoyed their time in nature for the first time all week, and it was the best time they had all week. The language included the combining of the boys' names because they do everything together which fits with current society. The pictures were realistic. The writing and the pictures appeared to be done with colored pencils as a medium for the book. This would be a good book for young readers because it uses the current language and sarcasm of today's society; however, I do think a few parts the children may not understand. It looks at the current issue of children preferring video games and television, instead of, going outside and exploring and using their imagination and knowledge to

create their own fun.

Ch_hayley Medsker says

The humour in this comic-like picture book is sure to make elementary aged students laugh. Readers have to really understand sarcasm to relate to Marla Frazee's "A Couple of Boys Have the Best Week Ever."

Two boys, Eamon and James, go to Eamon's grandparents house at the beach. The two boys are looking forward to spending time together at a nature summer camp. The boys bond over the course of the week, and really discover a lot about nature (not really)! However, Eamon and James do embark on some quirky adventures!

I appreciated the simplistic illustrations, which look like a child (a very talented one) could have drawn them. I also enjoyed the use of word bubbles and comic-like feel about the book. My students enjoyed the silliness of the protagonists and all of their wacky ways. The details were intricate and allows young readers to analyze many aspects the book offered. Again, Frazee's intentions and purpose was not to create a book that was heartfelt, insightful, or deep. But rather, to make young readers laugh and read for entertainment. She did just that!

Sarah says

Imagine your best week ever. What did you do? Who were you with? Well in this book, two friends, Eamon (pronounced Ay-mun) and James spend the week with Eamon's grandparents and have the best week ever. James was sad when his mom left...NOT! And shhhhh, don't tell anyone but Grandpa Bill uses bad words when he drives the boys to nature camp. The boys get to eat icebergs, jump on their bed, check out each other's tongues, practice meditation (well, in front of the t.v.), spend time at the beach (well not really), and decide that camp should really be called Sweat -a-Lot Camp. And poor Grandpa Bill all he wants to do is take them to see the penguins but they are too busy. Until the last night when they get busy making a special treat for Bill and Pam. When you read this book you will love the pictures that go along with story. Eamon and James are two very silly boys and the pictures are sure to make you laugh. Also make sure to check out the endpapers for photos of the boys. They are also really funny.

I love Marla Frazee drawings and this book just further validates her ability to write as well as she draws. This book is guaranteed to attract both boys and girls!

Melki says

Two pals have more fun hanging out together than they do at the Nature Camp they're attending.

This is pretty cute, though I was annoyed the boys didn't go see the penguin exhibit at the museum.

Bet Eamon's grandparents were glad when that week was over!

Kathryn Herbert says

A Couple of Boys Have the Best Week Ever, a storybook written and illustrated by Marla Frazee, is about two young boys named James and Eamon. These ordinary boys spend a week of their summer vacation living with Eamon's grandparents and going to Nature Camp. Bill, Eamon's grandpa, constantly wants to share his knowledge of Antarctica and love for penguins. Pam, Eamon's grandma, has a passion for cooking. Eamon's grandparents are laid back in the sense that are happy to have the boys be independent and make their own decisions. At the same time, they still manage to take care of them and let them experience new things without forcing them to do anything. While being away at Nature Camp, it ends up being the best week ever. Their free time ends up being spent on watching television, eating waffles, and playing video games. In this hilarious celebration for young boys, Frazee captures the true meaning of not only summer vacation itself, but what it means to be a kid.

Frazee successfully brings out the essence of great humor and adventure through her brightly colored cartoon-like illustrations. Although James and Eamon appear to be cartoon-like, they become distinguishable by the different characteristics of their hair styles. Furthermore, her pencil-and-gouache illustrations show just how different the two boys are, with Eamon only having a few belongings and James bringing his entire room with him. Throughout the book, the illustrator does a great job at comically contradicting the images with the text that is shown. When James arrives with a year's worth of belongings, the text sarcastically reads, "...and finally James arrives, with just a couple of his belongings." Frazee's alliterative expressions draws the reader in as well with the phrase, "Pam said she preferred people over penguins." Overall, this light hearted storybook shows the realistic relationship that two young best friends share with one another during summer vacation. A Couple of Boys Have the Best Week Ever ensures lots of laughter and cheers up audiences who are anticipating those summer months to come.

Rachel Lizan says

Description: Best friends, James and Eamon, spend a week a week at nature camp but have the best time, not at camp, but spending time together.

Genre: This Picture book is realistic fiction

Intended Audience: 1st Grade - 3rd Grade

Curriculum Connection: For elementary grades, I think this is a great example for students to use as a model for narrative writing. The topic of the best week ever is one that many students can relate to. Their writings and descriptions can be accompanied by their illustrations of the events.

Personal Reaction: I thought that this was a great friendship story. The descriptions of Eamon and James becoming Jamon is relatable for many of us when we think of our childhood best friends. They were typical boys having fun in the summer.

Assessment of Visual Appeal: Since nature camp was not the highlight of their week, most of the illustrations were of the other, more exciting things the two boys did together. What was interesting though

was that the endpapers are a photo album of the things they did do at summer camp. It is a great connector to the story and interesting to look through to fill in the gaps of what types of activities the boys did during their days.
