



A Boy Called Bat

Elana K. Arnold, Charles Santoso (illustrator)

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For Bixby Alexander Tam (nicknamed Bat), life tends to be full of surprises—some of them good, some not so good. Today, though, is a good-surprise day. Bat's mom, a veterinarian, has brought home a baby skunk, which she needs to take care of until she can hand him over to a wild-animal shelter.

But the minute Bat meets the kit, he knows they belong together. And he's got one month to show his mom that a baby skunk might just make a pretty terrific pet.

A Boy Called Bat Details

Date : Published March 14th 2017 by Walden Pond Press

ISBN :

Author : Elana K. Arnold , Charles Santoso (illustrator)

Format : Kindle Edition 208 pages

Genre : Childrens, Middle Grade, Realistic Fiction, Animals, Fiction, Family

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From Reader Review A Boy Called Bat for online ebook

Brittany says

This was so completely adorable, my heart almost exploded with feels!

Bat (Bixby Alexander Tam) struggles with seeing the world the same way other people do (you can infer he's on the spectrum), and one of his fascinations is animals. Serendipitously, his mom is a vet.

One day, she saves a baby skunk and Bat learns to care for it and falls in love. What follows is an endearing story that meshes Bat dealing with his social and emotional challenges while also learning to put something else's needs first.

This book covers so many issues: friendship, isolation, divorce, and perseverance.

It's adorable and perfect for 4th-6th grade.

Jasmine says

Really well done story about an autistic boy. We've got supportive family and teachers, a main character who isn't punished or mocked by the narrative for doing things differently, an acknowledgement that it can be difficult for people to communicate with someone who's mind works differently, and it isn't ABOUT autism. It's just a story about discovering what you want and proving you can go after it, about working things out with family and making friends.

On a personal note, it was pretty painful to read the first probably third of the book, as I kept cringing at how oblivious the main character was to social cues. He isn't botching cues, he's missing them entirely. And then I remembered how aware I was of subtext at that age, and realized "oh man that's pretty close to me". I've really worked hard to be aware of subtext and the things that are hinted at, and that can sometimes translate into me screaming at myself internally about all the things that are going wrong, sure that everyone will be mad at me if I mess it up. But that didn't happen in this book. He "messed things up" under my metric, and things worked out. That was remarkably soothing.

PLUS THE EYE CONTACT THING. So a classic victory condition of books about autistic characters is that they learn to make eye contact. They learn to make real human connection through eye contact. And in this book, not only is Bat not punished for not being into eye contact, he tries it out with a new friend and decides it isn't for him. His friend's eyes are nice to look at, but he's not reading anything special from them, in terms of learning who the person is or making "real human connection". Instead he looks at his friend's hands and how he uses them, and learns from that. That is a.) far more accurate to how I read people's character and moods than their eyes, b.) something I have never seen in a book before. The acknowledgement that the magic eye contact "read a person's soul in their eyes" doesn't work for you, BUT that doesn't mean that you can't read a person's soul through other means. That was pretty awesome.

Tj Shay says

I have been a teacher for thirty years. Bat, the main character in this book, is the most realistic depiction of a child on the Autism spectrum that I have read. The glorious thing to me, however, is that it doesn't feel like a lecture or a how-not-to, but just sweetly tells the story of a boy, his family, his teacher, and a most unlikely pet.

Wonderful story, real characters...a must have for every library.

Donalyn says

Reread in preparation to read the sequel. I adore Bat and Thor!

Rebecca McNutt says

This book is about as unique as they come, especially since one of the main characters isn't exactly a conventional family pet...

Bat's childhood has always been surrounded by animals since his mom is a veterinarian, and at times it can seem like she prioritizes them more than her son. When Bat's mom brings home a skunk in the process of being rehabilitated, he discovers a newfound friend and is able to appreciate the work his mother does. It's an extremely simple story but a memorable one for readers of all ages, and it stands out from the typical dog and cat books that often take over the genre of animal stories. Bat himself is a great character, precocious and accepting of all creatures. It was also nice to see a book about a child with autism featured as a main character that isn't patronizing or silly. I have a younger brother who's severely autistic and I think it's a topic rarely discussed properly in fiction, so *A Boy Called Bat* was impressive to see.

Erin Kelly says

What a great book! I loved Bat. He was such a well-developed character and the tone and voice of the novel is perfectly pitched for its audience. The illustrations were wonderful too. I really wanted to hold a skunk after reading this and I never thought I'd ever be in a position where I wished I knew more skunks.

Joanna Marie says

so innocent and full of character for the young ones. now i get it why my 10 y/o brother loved this book.

Margie says

During the tenure of your career thousands of children will walk into your classroom, the school library. If you are fortunate you will be able to offer opportunities to students in grades kindergarten through graduation from high school. You will learn all their names. You will learn to support all their learning needs with access to materials inside and outside the walls of your facility. You will give the right book to the right reader at the right time. And just like snowflakes no two of them will be alike but you will be stunned by the beauty each one reveals to you.

This past week a boy, similar but not exactly like any previous students, walked into my life through the pages of a book. As soon as I met him, he had my heart. I cheered for him from page one until page one hundred, ninety-two. *A Boy Called Bat* (Walden Pond Press, March 14, 2017) written by Elana K. Arnold with pictures by Charles Santoso will find a place in your heart too.

My full recommendation: [http://librariansquest.blogspot.com/2...](http://librariansquest.blogspot.com/2017/03/a-boy-called-bat.html)

Mary Ann says

Our students have been eagerly reading *A Boy Called Bat*, drawn in by the adorable cover. Many students relate to the bond that Bat feels for the baby skunk, but it is about much more.

I love how this quiet book shows how a pet can help children form relationships, take responsibility and feel a sense of empathy. Even more so, I love how it shares the story of an autistic boy whose neurodiversity is just part of who he is.

Scott Fillner says

A Boy Called Bat is such a wonderful story Elana K Arnold. The book just blew me away. Not only is the writing outstanding...but the illustrations really enhance the story. I cannot wait for it to become a book in the wild for others to read.

The book is ideal for any students entering 4th grade or any students B or above 4th grade.

Bernadette Kearns says

This book would be an excellent read aloud in elementary classrooms. The character Bat could teach so many children what autism looks/feels like and would be a great way for our autistic students to see themselves in the literature that we share. As a mom of an animal loving 3rd grader this also hits the sweet spot for those kids. For my middle school students, this is another book to teach us about our diverse learning community. ❤?

Corinne says

Blurbed this one! I said:

"A Boy Called Bat is sensitive, sweet, and super fun. I read this book with the biggest smile on my face."

I was also a sensitivity reader for the book's portrayal of its autistic protagonist. I thought it was excellent and absolutely feel comfortable recommending it.

Niki (Daydream Reader) says

A must read! A great read aloud! Uplifting!

Michele Knott says

I really enjoyed Arnold's upcoming book. I think it will be a hit with young readers, especially those who have a soft spot for animals.

I like that this book includes some diversity with the main character coming from a divorced family and is most likely on the autism spectrum, without the book being about that.

Paula M. of Her Book Thoughts! says

When I read the blurb of ABCB, I instantly remembered my younger brother and I want to admit that that's one of the reasons why I want to read and review Elana's book. Not only that, I'm an animal lover myself and even though Bat is way younger than me, it was not hard to feel for him while reading. But don't let Bat's age hinder you from reading ABCB. This book is genuine and very easy to read. That's what I like the most. Arnold's writing was not hard to get into and Bat's story will make you care.

I also recommend *A Boy Called Bat* for young readers who are looking for their first read. I would want my kids to read this someday so that they'll have their introduction to authentic and diverse characters plus well written plot. This book is not only full of adorableness but full of heart as well. I'm looking forward to more Elana Arnold book no matter what age group she's writing it for!
