

IDA B...AND HER PLANS TO MAXIMIZE FUN, AVOID DISASTER, AND (POSSIBLY) SAVE THE WORLD

Louisiana Young Readers' Choice Award Nominee 2007 Grades 3-5

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Ida B...and Her Plans to Maximize Fun, Avoid Disaster, and (Possibly) Save the World by Katherine Hannigan. Greenwillow Books, 2004. 246 p.

Summary

With the artful use of first person narration, Hannigan conveys the character of an unforgettable young heroine, who is very intelligent, highly spirited and imaginative. Ida B Applewood, an only child, lives with her parents on their Wisconsin farm and apple orchard. She talks to the brook and attaches notes onto miniature rafts requesting information about the world beyond her farm and orchard. Her friends are the apple trees that she named Beulah, Pastel, and Henry VIII. Ida B is always planning for fun until family problems change her life. When her mother develops cancer, her parents are forced to send Ida B to public school rather than continuing to home school her. Ida B feels angry and betrayed because she had a miserable experience in kindergarten. She dreads going back to the public school, but her first day turns out to be better than she expected. However, she is devastated when her parents sell part of the orchard, and new people move onto the land. She does not know how she will live without her beloved trees. With some sage wisdom from a caring fourth grade teacher, as well as the unconditional love of her mother and father, Ida B slowly begins to adjust.

Awards

School Library Journal Best Book
IRA/CBC Teachers' Choice
ALA Booklist Editors' Choice
Original Voices Award (Nominated) 2004
Book Sense Book of the Year (Nominated) 2005

Author's Biography

Katherine Hannigan grew up in western New York with a mom, a dad, two brothers, an assortment of stray dogs and cats, and a few pet rodents that *usually* remained caged. She has undergraduate degrees in mathematics, education, and painting and a graduate degree in studio art. She has worked as an education coordinator for Head Start and, most recently, as an assistant professor of art and design. She now lives in a tiny town in northeastern Iowa. Katherine Hannigan has her own official website located at: www.katherinehannigan.com

Related Titles

Apples and Trees

Apples to Oregon by Deborah Hopkinson. (LYRC 2007 Ballot)
The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein.

Personal Change, Challenge, Family, Grief

Because of Winn-Dixie by Kate DiCamillo.
A Corner of the Universe by Ann Martin.
Defiance by Valerie Hobbs.
Good Luck to Mr. K. by Louise Borden.
The Graduation of Jake Moon by Barbara Park.
Harriet the Spy by Louise Fitzhugh.
Ruby Holler by Sharon Creech.
Sahara Special by Esme Raji Codell.
What Would Joey Do? by Jack Gantos.

Classroom Connections

HarperCollins Discussion Questions

http://www.harpercollins.com/global_scripts/product_catalog/book_xml.asp?isbn=0060730242&tc=rq

The website includes a reading guide with fourteen (14) discussion questions.

Geography

- Have each student locate on a map a river that runs through Wisconsin and write an essay using their imaginations describing where a toy raft might eventually wind up if they were to release it into the river they have chosen.
- Locate the state of Wisconsin on a map and research the kinds of trees that would grow in an orchard in that state.

Language Arts

- Compare *Ida B* with *Apples to Oregon*. Compare and contrast the personalities of the two main characters: their relationship to the trees and their attitudes toward life.

Web Links

Book and Author

Bookhive

www.bookhive.org

This excellent site about children's books includes a lively summary of *Ida B*.

Harper Children's Books: Interview with Hannigan about *Ida B*

http://www.harperchildrens.com/teacher/catalog/book_interview_xml.asp?isbn=0060730242

Harper Children's Books: *Ida B*

http://www.harperchildrens.com/catalog/book_xml.asp?isbn=0060730242

This site includes a reading guide with discussion questions, an excerpt from the book, author interview and a list of awards.

Kids Wings (Suzy Red): Ida B

<http://suzyred.com/2005ida.html>

This site includes a summary of book and web links to topics of the book.

Kidsreads.com

www.kidsreads.com

This excellent site about children's books includes a good review of *Ida B*.

<http://www.kidsreads.com/reviews/0060730242.asp>

Nancy Keane's Booktalks

http://www.nancykeane.com/booktalks/hannigan_ida.htm

Three different booktalks on *Ida B* are included on this excellent children's literature site. Nancy Keane's site is a real gold mine of helpful information.

Texas Bluebonnet Award 2005-2006 Nominees

<http://www.txla.org/groups/tba/nominees.html>

This site lists the titles on the Bluebonnet Award. Scroll to Hannigan. Click on Review for excerpts from reviews.

Cancer

Kids Konnected

<http://www.kidskonnected.org/>

Subtitle of this site is "Friendship, understanding, education and support for kids who have a parent with cancer."

Wisconsin

Apple Journal: Wisconsin Orchards

<http://www.applejournal.com/wi01.htm>

This site includes information about Wisconsin apple orchards.

Wisconsin: Life's So Good: Official Wisconsin Department of Tourism site

<http://www.travelwisconsin.com/placestogo/index.htm>

This site includes excellent maps and information about Wisconsin.