

NEVER MIND! A TWIN NOVEL

Louisiana Young Readers' Choice Award Nominee 2007 Grades 6-8

Submitted by Melissa Blickem, Graduate Student, School of Library and Information Science, LSU, (Professor: Dr. Margie Thomas)

Never Mind! A Twin Novel by Avi and Rachel Vail. Harper Collins, 2004. 200 p.

Summary

This farcical novel is told in alternating chapters from the points of view of two twelve-year old fraternal twins who are as different as day and night. Edward is a small, low achieving mischief-maker. Meg is tall, smart and pretty and only cares about going to the right school and belonging to the right group. Edward goes to seventh grade at an alternative school, while Meg attends an elite private school. Edward is annoyed by Meg's obsession with popularity. When he overhears her tell a girl on the phone that she has a brother who is cool and has a band, Edward sees his chance to teach Meg a lesson. However, Edward's plans backfire in an incredible comedy of error. The plot is unbelievable, but, nevertheless, fun and humorous. The personalities of the brother and sister really show in their narratives that read like diary entries. By the end of the story, both Meg and Edward have both grown up a bit and have changed their values and their attitudes toward each other. This is a fun, light read that kids would enjoy.

Avi's Biography

Avi was born in New York City but currently lives in Denver, Colorado. He got his name from his twin sister and has always used it the way she gave it to him. He likes photography and believes in finding things out for oneself, not always accepting the answers one gives you. He has been what he considers a writer since he was seventeen. Avi is a prolific and popular writer of novels for children and young adults. He has won numerous awards including the Newbery Medal for *Crispin: Cross of Lead* and the Newbery Honor for *Nothing But the Truth*.

Other Titles by Avi

Crispin: Cross of Lead – Newbery Medal Book

Nothing but the Truth – Newbery Honor Book

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle – Newbery Honor Book

Don't You Know There's a War On

The Mayor of Central Park

Rachel Vail's Biography

Vail was born on July 25, 1966 in New York City and grew up in New Rochelle, NY with her parents and her younger brother. Growing up, she liked reading and theater. She attended Georgetown University and held several different jobs before becoming a full-time writer. She is married to a doctor and has two sons.

Other Titles by Rachel Vail

Daring to be Abigail

Wonder

Ever After

Do-Over

If We Kiss
Mama Rex & T
Sometimes I'm Bombaloo
Over the Moon
The Friendship Ring Series

Related Titles: Twins

Jacob Have I Loved by Katherine Paterson.
Ruby Holler by Sharon Creech.

Classroom Connections

See online Study Guides (PDF Versions)

HarperChildrens.com

http://www.harperchildrens.com/webcontent/teachers_guides/pdf/0060543159.pdf

- HarperChildren's study guide contains curriculum connections for the book *Never Mind!* Some areas include Science, Language Arts and Social Studies. Questions for discussion are also included.

Scholastic.com: Literature Circle Guide to *Never Mind!*

- http://teacher.scholastic.com/clubs/pdfs/nevermind_t.pdf
This includes a summary of the book, author information and suggested answers to Literature Circle Questions.
- http://teacher.scholastic.com/clubs/pdfs/nevermind_q.pdf
This includes list of questions about *Never Mind! A Twin Novel*.

Character Analysis Activity

- http://teacher.scholastic.com/lessonplans/unit_characteranalysis.htm
Emy Lopez, a seventh grade teacher in California, has a lesson plan related to character analysis that can be used with any novel.

**Connections by Elizabeth Dumas, Good Hope Middle School, West Monroe
Grade 8**

ELA Unit 2: Laughing Out Loud - Humorous Fiction/Essays If a class set of this book is available, this book would be a good choice for an English or Language Arts class to read during this unit. An excellent Literature Circle Guide with questions and answers keyed to Bloom's Taxonomy is available at

http://teacher.scholastic.com/clubs/pdfs/nevermind_t.pdf as of 1/31/06

Activity 3: Elements and Techniques of Humor. Excerpts from this book could be used for this activity.

Web Links

Avi's Official Website

<http://www.avi-writer.com/>

Children's Literature Newsletter: Featured Author – Avi

<http://www.carolhurst.com/newsletters/23dnewsletters.html>

Article about Avi along with brief comments about some of his books.

HarperChildrens.com: Never Mind! A Twin Novel

http://www.harperchildrens.com/catalog/book_interview_xml.asp?isbn=0060543159

Interview with authors Avi and Rachel Vail about their novel *Never Mind! A Twin Novel*. Links also to a teacher's guide, an excerpt from the novel, and author information.

Houghton Mifflin: Meet Avi

<http://www.eduplace.com/kids/hmr/mtai/avi.html>

Publisher site offers a biography about the author.

The Internet Public Library: Avi

<http://www.ipl.org/div/kidspace/askauthor/Avi.html>

Brief biography about the author. Also includes an interview conducted in 1996.

Kids Read: Author Avi

<http://www.kidsreads.com/authors/au-avi.asp>

An interview with Avi is available. The site also contains links to his books, which includes excerpts from the books.

Nancy Keane's Booktalks

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

This site has two booktalks about *Never Mind*.

Penguin Group: Rachel Vail

http://us.penguinroup.com/nf/Author/AuthorPage/0,,0_1000016877,00.html

Publisher site contains a brief biography of author Rachel Vail.

Rachel Vail's Website

<http://www.rachelvail.com/>

Author's site includes a biography, pictures of her and her family, a list of her books and short stories, an interview with Rachel and Avi about *Never Mind* and contact information.

Scholastic's Author's and Books Website: Avi

<http://www2.scholastic.com/teachers/authorsandbooks/authorstudies/authorhome.jhtml?authorID=1768&collateralID=5091&displayName=Biography>

Biography of Avi.

Scholastic.com: Literature Circle Guide to *Never Mind!*

http://teacher.scholastic.com/clubs/pdfs/nevermind_t.pdf

http://teacher.scholastic.com/clubs/pdfs/nevermind_q.pdf

PDF version of study guides for questions to accompany *Never Mind! A Twin Novel*.