

ONCE UPON A COOL MOTORCYCLE DUDE

Louisiana Young Readers' Choice Award Nominee 2008 Grades 3-5

Submitted by Melanie Guillory, Graduate Student, LSU School of Library & Information Science (Professor: Dr. Margie Thomas); and Cherie Hahn, Student, University of Louisiana at Lafayette (Instructor: Dorothy L. Grimsley)

Once Upon A Cool Motorcycle Dude by Kevin O'Malley. Illustrated by Kevin O'Malley, Carol Heyer, and Scott Goto. Walker and Company, 2005. 32 pages.

Summary

This innovative book is clever and will appeal to grade school students. The premise is that a girl and a boy are assigned to write a fairy tale as a team. The slangy comments of the girl and boy are shown in dialogue boxes. They cannot agree on the tone and plot of their fairy tale. The girl composes a sappy story about a princess whose ponies are being stolen by a giant. The boy gets fed up with the sentimental story and adds a tough muscular motorcycle dude who agrees to save the ponies if the princess will spin gold thread for him. The girl is outraged that all the princess does is sit and make thread, so she changes the princess into an assertive, strong female who tells the dude to make his own thread. The princess then single-handedly defeats the giant. Images of the boy and girl talking, the girl's version, and the boy's version are portrayed by three distinct illustration styles, sometimes all on one page. Kids will no doubt get a kick out of this book. The premise will provide plenty of language arts exercises, plus material for discussions of gender stereotyping.

Awards and "Best Book" Lists

Oppenheim Toy Portfolio Gold Award
IRA-CBC Children's Choice
2005 School Library Journal Best Books of the Year

Kevin O'Malley's Biography

Kevin O'Malley is the author and one of the illustrators of this book. He decided to start writing books when he was in the fourth grade. When he misbehaved in class, he was sent to the library. He was inspired when he read *Where the Wild Things Are* and decided that he would become an author and illustrator. He enjoys illustrating children's books and telling children about his experiences as an author/illustrator. He also has an enthusiastic sense of humor. O'Malley currently lives in Baltimore, Maryland with his two sons and artist wife.

<http://mywebpages.comcast.net/komalley>

http://www.childrenslit.com/f_omall.html

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

Other Titles Written and Illustrated by Kevin O'Malley

Humpty Dumpty Egg-Splodes

My Lucky Hat

Straight to the Pole

Carl Caught a Flying Fish

Froggy Went A-Courtin'

Other Titles Illustrated by Kevin O'Malley

The Lucky Lizard by Ellen A. Kelley.

The Candystore Man by Jonathan London.

Halloween Pie by Michael O. Tunnell.

Carol Heyer's Biography

Carol Heyer started her career as a screenwriter and a production designer and is now a full-time author and illustrator. She has written and/or illustrated 24 picture books and has received numerous awards for her books. Her images are vividly realistic, detailed, and imaginative. More information can be found on her website: <http://www.carolheyer.com/heyewelcome.htm>

Other Titles Retold and Illustrated by Carol Heyer

Rapunzel

The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood

The Easter Story

The First Christmas

A Christmas Carol

Scott Goto's Biography

Scott Goto was born and raised in Honolulu, Hawaii. He attended the University of Hawaii and the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California. Goto has illustrated picture books and textbooks, as well as illustrations for advertisements. He currently works as a freelance illustrator and lives in Honolulu.

<http://www.scottgoto.com/HOME.html>

Other Titles Illustrated by Scott Goto

The Enormous Turnip by Alexei Tolstoy.

The Great Pancake Escape by Paul Many.

Related Titles

The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig by Eugene Trivizas.

The True Story of the Three Little Pigs by Jon Scieszka.

Rumpelstilskin's Daughter by Diane Stanley.

The Three Silly Billies by Margie Plantini.

Tractor Man is Here by Mini Grey.

Please Bury Me in the Library by J. Patrick Lewis.

Rosa by Nikki Giovanni.

Classroom Connections

Language Arts

- Learning About the Genre of Fairy Tales:
http://www.geocities.com/ljacoby_2000/fairytales.html Discussion of the elements of fairy tales plus many links to resources and activities to use with fairy tales.
- Teach the elements of fairy tales.
- Discuss point of view in the fairy tale. Read aloud a traditional fairy tale to the students. Have students rewrite the story using a different point of view.

- Teacher Net Fairy Tale Unit <http://teachers.net/lessons/posts/923.html> Activities to use in a unit on fairy tales. Includes suggestions for group work.
- WebQuest The Realm of Fairy Tales
<http://www-ma.beth.k12.pa.us/jhoke/jhwebquest/task.htm> WebQuest for grades 4 -5. This is an online activity that the students can complete with partners. Students can read the online fairy tales and complete activities. Resources are included.

Art

- Three artists contributed illustrations to this book. Have the students identify the 3 different styles. Have them discuss the various techniques.
- <http://picturingbooks.imaginarylands.org/> This site includes descriptions of different types of illustrations.
- Have the students make finger puppets to help tell the story.

Writing

- Allow girls and boys to pair up and write a story together to share with the class.
- Ask students to write a personal reaction after reading the book.
- Write about a time when you were asked to work together but things did not go too well.

Social Studies

- Discuss the importance of compromising when working together.
- Discuss the different points of view of the girl and the boy. Discuss gender stereotyping.

Web Site about the book

Walker

<http://www.walkeryoungreaders.com/books/catalog.php?key=485>

Publisher summary of the book.