

SO B. IT

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

Submitted by Christy Kern, School Teacher at Sixth Ward Middle School, Choctaw and Graduate Student at School of Library and Information Science, LSU
(Professor: Dr. Margie Thomas)

So B. It: A Novel by Sarah Weeks. Harper Collins, 2004. 245 p.

Summary

This is a story about a twelve-year-old girl named Heidi It, who grows up with a mentally disabled mother and a neighbor that has agoraphobia. Heidi's mother, So B. It, can speak only 23 words and has difficulty communicating. Bernadette, the neighbor, helps to raise Heidi and take care of her mother, but her agoraphobia does not allow her to leave the apartment. Heidi knows nothing about her birth or her family other than her mother. She longs to learn about this part of her life. When she finds a photograph, she feels compelled to learn what really happened. She sets out alone on a journey from Reno to New York. Heidi must deal with an array of emotions and situations during her journey. When she finally arrives in New York, she discovers the truth but suffers a great loss at the same time. Heidi is a compelling individual who faces the world and the truth with courage and determination.

Awards

Parent's Choice Gold Award
ALA Notable Children's Book
ALA Best Books for Young Adults

Author's Biography

Sarah Weeks was born in Ann Arbor, Michigan and now lives in New York City. She sings and writes songs and children's books. Ms. Weeks has enjoyed music and writing since she was a little girl. She is a graduate of Hampshire College and NYU. Ms. Weeks is a member of the Writing Program at the New School University in New York City. She has two sons, Gabe and Nat.

<http://www.harperchildrens.com/authorintro/index.asp?authorid=12867>

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

Other Titles by Sarah Weeks

Follow the Moon
Jumping the Scratch
Without You

Related Titles: Journeys and Searching

Becoming Naomi León by Pam Muñoz Ryan.
Bird by Angela Johnson.
Kira-Kira by Cynthia Kadohata.
My Louisiana Sky by Kimberly Willis Holt.
Walk Two Moons by Sharon Creech.

Classroom Connections

See **Kidsreads.com – So B. It**

http://www.kidsreads.com/guides/so_b_it1.asp

This includes discussion questions for *So B. It*.

Language Arts: Journals

- Students will keep a journal of “What I Know About” different topics like Heidi did in the story.
- Have students discuss situations, feelings and characters in the book as they read it.

Social Studies: Maps

- Have students trace Heidi’s journey on a map. They will determine the distance between her hometown and her final destination. Research the various places she passed through.

Science: Mental Health

- Students will research what agoraphobia is and write a short report on it.

Reader’s Theatre

- Allow students to perform a “Reader’s Theatre.” You may want to use the sample one given on Weeks’ website: <http://www.sarahweeks.com/>

Connections by Elizabeth Dumas, Good Hope Middle School, West Monroe Grade 6

ELA Unit 2: Fiction-Realistic Fiction

Activity 1: Characteristics of Fiction and Realistic Fiction. Excerpts from this novel can be read to illustrate some of the real-life issues found in realistic fiction.

Activity 3: Presentation of Stories with One Prominent Area (Plot, Setting, Character). Although *So B. It* is a major character as well as the book’s title, this book also emphasizes the plot – an intriguing mystery that leads to Heidi’s personal quest.

Grade 8

ELA Unit 5: Novel

Activity 1: Sustained Silent Reading. This book can be included on a recommended independent reading list for students. It can then be used for the other follow-up activities in this unit.

Web Links

Kidsreads.com – So B. It

http://www.kidsreads.com/guides/so_b_it1.asp

This includes information, discussion questions and a biography of the author.

Sarah Weeks

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

This site offers information about the author’s life. It lists other books written by her, answers to questions many people usually ask her, information about her author visits. The site has great “Reader’s Theatre” material for some of her books including *So B. It*.

Internet Mental Health: Agoraphobia

<http://www.mentalhealth.com/dis/p20-an02.html>

This site gives the medical description and other information about agoraphobia.

Puberty101.com

http://www.puberty101.com/aacap_parentmi.shtml

This site gives information for children with parents that have mental illness.