

POETRY

No One Will Know

~Ally

No I do not I constantly say
 Why do you think such things
 This no one will ever understand

I sometimes wonder how, why
 All these things can happen
 One of the many unanswered questions

Maybe the world will crash down
 I will be the last one standing
 No matter what the odds

No one will know
 How I survived
 Although I'm still here

As the people wondered
 I rose above all odds
 Crashing through the horror

If no one understands that's fine with me
 No one will ever know anyway-
 What truly happened on that sad day-

I know I was there
 No one believes me
 I alone will stand

Even if the world crashes down
 I was there - I will always remember
 The dying faces - while they stayed nameless

People

~Ally

Some people will stay nameless
 These people should just stay faceless
 I will always be with these people through and
 through

Even with these people here
 Since I know that they can hear
 No matter what there's always two

While I try to ignore
 All I know is that there are more
 To get your attention they will say "achoo"

Even if they glare and stare
 I know they'll be the first to lose their hair
 At times they will say boo

Many of them want to borrow
 Which they say they will give back tomorrow
 Ya! Like that'll come true

Soon they absorb more and more
 And make their own little snob galore
 Maybe you know them too.

As I watch them walk down the street
 All dressed in glue
 I hear them say, how do you do, Mr. Magoo?

A New World

~Becky

As I gaze upon you now
Wonder-filled looks in your eyes
I realized before I saw you
You'd go through many lies
You've reached a brand new world
Much different than before
Your old world was of dreams
Cotton candy and sweets galore
Bust as I look upon you now
I realize I have a great task
For in this new world you must be taught
To never hide behind a mask
People always staring
Rumors flying high
These are the things ahead of you
That you cannot pass by
There will always be mean people
Always trying to hurt you so
But I want you to know
That everywhere with you I'll go
I'll try my best to comfort you
I'll shelter you from fears
I'll lead you in the right way
And wipe away your tears
I will not always be around
To help you with your pains
You'll have to make your own decisions
Through life's so crooked lanes
My hand won't always be there
To hold yours nice and tight
My arms won't always be there
To shelter you from night
My footsteps won't last forever
For you to follow in
My eyes won't always light up
Every time I see you grin
My smile will soon pass by
A memory it will all become
And do not think you've ever lost
To me you've always won
I'll always be in memory
Forever in your heart
I love you more and more each day
I know we'll never part

Our Love

~Becky

I love the way you tell your jokes
I love the way you laugh
I love it when we share a Coke
Even if you drink more than half
I love the way you smile at me
I love the way you stare
I love to hear you talk and then
I love the way you care
I love it when you write me notes
Or take me on a date
I love it when you take my coat
And how I never have to wait
There is one more thing I have to say
Before this poem ends
What I love about you most
Is the message your heart sends

Your Heart Sends

~Becky

I love the way you tell your jokes
I love the way you laugh
I love it when we share a Coke
Even if you drink more than half
I love the way you smile at me
I love the way you stare
I love to hear you talk and then
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I love it when you write me notes
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I love it when you take my coat
And how I never have to wait
There is one more thing I have to say
Before this poem ends
What I love about you most
Is the message your heart sends

You're Loved

~Becky

Troubles with guys
Problems with 'rents
These things to your eyes
Many tears have sent
You tell me what's wrong
And I'm not sure what to say
But I'll keep my hand in reach
So you do not fall away
Our lives are changing
Each and every day
But to his throne we are closer
Each step of the way
You may not think
That anyone cares
But I want you to know
That to you I swear
I swear my undying love
And my friendship to you
I swear to walk with you
And always stay true
I know there will be heartaches
Along this bumpy road
But remember that I'm here
To help carry your load
So do not be troubled
And don't be sad
Although I know it's tough
I want you to be glad
Be glad because you're loved
And because you are here
And with a friend like me
We've got nothing to fear

Cats

~Jamie

Fat, fuzzy
Pouncing at toys
Lazy sleeps all day
Cute

Running Down My Tunnel Of Life

~Jamie

Running down my tunnel of life
I saw that light at the end
Getting closer and closer
I wanted it all to stop
It happened all too fast, it was way out of control
As I kept moving, things got worse
Now I had to go all the way
It hit me like a ton of bricks
Knocked me flat on my butt
With not a clue of what to do...
Or what I did to deserve to get pushed down so far

Interstellar Travel

~Christina

Lying upon my solitary patch of earth,
My back to the world,
My eyes lifted to the heavens

For but a few mere moments,
In this vast ever-expanding cosmos,
My soul leaps out, leaving behind an empty shell

My spirit thrives, free to explore the uncharted,
Stars beam the way to radiant galaxies,
Forever spiraling into the depths of black holes

Zooming beyond icy moons, and exotic lands
Comets swishing past, trailing ice chips
Towards the outer edges of the time-space continuum

The universe stretches through eternity,
Each moment briefly shines,
But soon fades, as a candle flickers and dies

Our planet becomes but a mere pinprick,
In the scheme of things, we are new, raw,
Clay yet unhardened by the ages

We shine brilliantly, briefly,
Spinning endlessly out of control,
Deeper and deeper into space, into nothingness

And yet somehow, we do matter,
We are to the universe, what quarks are to our solar
system,
But we have an impact, and we make a difference

If I Were A Church

~Jamie

If I were a church.....
I would open my doors to everyone.
I would rejoice through music to show my love for God.

If I were a church...
People would know they could come to me in their
time of need.
I would be loving, trusting, and forgiving of all.

Only if I were a church.

Loneliness Is

~Jamie

Your best friend unexpectedly moving to another state
Sitting at home all alone
Being left out
Never getting a phone call from a friend
Not talking to your mother because you had a fight

Venturing With My Angel

~Morgan

(Dedicated to my hard working family)

I've always wished for an angel friend,
who I could travel and laugh with until the end.

We could venture on white-sanded beaches,
while I joke about some black, slimy leeches.

Staring at the sun-setting horizon we'd play,
as we watch as dusk turns from the day.

In green meadows we could stray,
or sit in a cornfield picking at hay.

We'd wander into a peaceful wood,
and munch on sweet berries that were oh-so-good.

The two of us would forever last,
remembering journeys from the past.

Flowers for Mother

~Jamie

I came across a flowerbed
Full of beautiful tulips
They were red, yellow and pink
I picked one for my mother
The stem was long, a vibrant color of
green
The petals were as soft as baby skin
I skipped all the way back home
So excited to give it to her
I ran through the front door
Down the hallway and around the sharp
corner
To find my beautiful mother
Sitting at the kitchen table
I told her to close her eyes and hold out
her hand
As she felt the soft touch of the petals,
she said
Thank You.

Love Song To My Teddy Bear

~Jamie

Oh, my teddy bear how we lay in my bed
And at night while I sleep you dance through my
head

You keep me so soft, cozy and warm
That it doesn't bother me that your arm is torn

With your button eyes and white fur
When I'm with you everything's a blur

A Night Up North

~Morgan

Finally,
 we arrive there,
there at my grandparents' trailer.
Where the humid unfiltered air drifts among the rooms.
 It's nothing like night.

Night is where darkness
 deceives
 daylight
during the constant breezes of cool air.
Night, where the stars light the sky to display
 The newborn
 Full moon.

I touch a bullfrog that is
 slipping
 and sliding
like a pile of putty
 it is midnight, and I've snuck out.
The crickets play their wings
 like they've played 100 times before.

Morning is dawning quickly.
Mosquitoes
 buzz about
 going about they're morning errands.
Another night of
 busy behavior is over, and
 morning is on the move.

Great Love

~Katie

Every day and every year
When you were far and when you were near
Through our crafts, either painting or sewing
With your looks and words was always knowing
The great heart that you had and the love that you spread
Through your actions in the life that you led
Everyone who knew you had a taste of this love
And in your missions it flew like on the back of a dove
Out to people who were so grateful to thee
Now knowing the severity of this love to be
Not only your family but your friends so dear
When there was trouble or hurting you were always near
You were unbelievable in every way
And when asked you always knew what to say
Even after your death you did so many things
Looking at the future I don't know what it brings
My life has changed, there's a part that is missing
Though I know you'll always be with me still I yearn for some kissing
Now I realize what great things love can bring
I only hope that this great love is a thing
That can spread through the world and let everyone know
The importance of family and loving them so
I just guess this poem is a way to say
Your influence on me, and the way it will stay
Now as I think of you, not holding you I sigh
But I just want to say I love you,
so I love you and goodbye.

The Rescue on the English Channel

~Kristin

In the year of 1940, the world was at war
The British and French soldiers were trapped on France's shore.
The soldiers waiting to be rescued were 400,00 or more
Churchill thought they could rescue 40,000
but even that would be a chore.

The English Channel was a 43-mile corridor
On it was Dunkirk, the only open port, they swore.
To rescue all the soldiers they would really have to soar
If they were to get them all onto the other shore.

The waters on the English Channel seemed like they would play
A game with all the boats to try to make them sway.
There was a group who met every night to pray
"God can calm the sea," they would say.

For nine days, the water no longer acted gay.
Hitler mysteriously stopped the panzers that May.
So hundreds of ships were able to come in each day.
They rescued over 338,000 men that way.



United We Stand

~Jacy

United We Stand. I am sure I am not the only one who has seen those words on billboards, television commercials, and inside magazines. It is a phrase we are seeing quite often now. Until I knew the true meaning of it, I did not think much of it every time I saw it. Now, I know much better . September 11th brought unity to the United States. When I hear that date, September 11th 2001, it sends chills up and down my back. I picture fallen buildings, worried people, and worn out firemen, policemen and volunteers. Someone told me once September 11th was a good experience for the United States. At that point I totally disagreed. How could thousands of innocent Americans dying be a good thing for anyone? If a terrible thing like this would have happened to any other country, they might have run and hidden, but not the United States. Not only did Americans continue normal activity in their day, like flying in an airplane they also took action and helped. Many fundraisers raised money for victim's families and rescue efforts. Also, it helped pay for feeding and doctoring the injured. Many people, young and old, from around the country came voluntarily to help clean up ground zero, take care of those families who lost a loved one, or just to be there to support those few who survived.

No one knows exactly how it felt being in a shaking, burning building with people dying all around or on flight 192 just moments away from hitting one of the trade centers and knowing everyone in that plane is going to die at that second. Not everyone can say they know the feeling of seeing on

television or in the newspaper someone jumping to their death out of the 100th floor of one of the buildings, and knowing it is a loved one that won't be coming home from work that night. No one knows those feelings unless they are experienced. I could continue writing just how awful September 11th was, but will I ever get the true feeling of it? Some people now are even scared to go to work or school, not knowing what will happen. Now answering my question. I may not know the true feeling of September 11th but I do know the feeling of donating a little money to an organization or a little time to help out some one else.

Now, just knowing how precious every day is, hopefully no one will take anything for granted.

This story does have a good point. What does make America great? That is the question this story answers. America came together when they really needed each other. Americans knew everyone could make a difference, and that is exactly what every person did and is continually doing.

Good Things Come In Small Packages

~Pratha

Of all of the places I've been to, Appleton WI is by far, the friendliest. The people here really seem to have a way of understanding each other (with the exception of a few). For example, if you go to a store, most cashiers will talk to you...ask how the weather is...their opinion on the product you're purchasing etc. Not all places are like this.

I recently went on a trip to New York City, and I felt...out of place. Everyone there was always in their own little world, with their walkman on, their coffee in hand, and their bag on their shoulder. It was almost scary...everyone seemed to be doing the same thing. Luckily I had my family with me to talk to.

If you got into a taxi, the drivers would be absolutely silent, except for "Hello" and "Goodbye" and "That'll be...dollars". But if you asked a question, as simple as "how's the weather been here?", they would open up and tell you stories and jokes, discuss politics and just talk as if they hadn't talked since they left home. This shows how desperate they were to talk to someone. Here in Appleton, if you get on a bus, the driver greets you and right away you feel welcome.

I was on a subway in New York when all of a sudden, a man went up to a college student (I think) and started swearing at him. Later, my dad went up to the student and asked him if he knew the man, and the guy said no! The man had gotten off at the previous stop, but the most amazing part of the whole incident, was that no one seemed to notice or respond. They were still in their own world, even the guy who got yelled at. I guess it happens a lot.

Maybe the people in New York are always like this, or maybe the recent September 11 occurrence has something to do with it, but everyone seemed to be blocked from the world around them.

Now don't think that I'm only saying this about Appleton because I live here. People who have barely been here notice the difference between other cities and Appleton. I was once with my grandpa, and he was introducing me to somebody. He said that I was from Appleton (he lives in Milwaukee) and that Appleton was the best place to live, that is was great, and a beautiful city. Two of my uncles (one lives in St. Louis, and the other lives in Washington D.C.), also agree with him.

Appleton is a small place compared with bigger cities, and it may have a smaller population, but it is still the city with the most friendly, and neighborly people. Remember...good things come in small packages. In this case, small cities.

BOOK REVIEWS

Ender's Game, by Orson Scott Card

~review by Alex

Ender's Game: A Must Read

The children of Earth are being taken to a secret military installation in space, and they are being trained to combat an alien threat. This is the main plot of *Ender's Game*, by Orson Scott Card. *Ender's Game* has won the Hugo and Nebula awards and has been a New York Times bestseller. *Ender's Game* is a great book, one of my favorites, because of its superb plot and character development.

Ender's Game has an exciting plot, making the book hard to put down. *Ender's Game* has three story lines that Card beautifully weaves together. One story line is on Earth, where Ender Wiggan's (the main character) brother and sister are writing in political journals, under assumed identities. They use their writings to influence important people in the world. The second, and main, story line follows Ender Wiggan. He is taken, at the age of six, to a military installation in space (called Battleschool) where, along with many other children, he is trained to be a military commander. The third plot line follows the teachers at Battleschool as they prepare for the coming war with the aliens, called buggers. At the end of the book, Ender's siblings have influenced the world so that it will support the children of Battleschool to lead the army against the buggers. Ender's teachers have given him enough training so that he can lead the army. However, Ender must lead the forces of Earth alone. The plot of *Ender's Game* is amazing. Card writes very well, creating a story that is very believable. The plot takes twists and turns and rises to a huge final climax. I just couldn't put this book down; I read it in two days. An integral part of the plot is the characters, and Card created very interesting and life-like characters for *Ender's Game*.

The characters of *Ender's Game* move the book from good science fiction, to a book that is truly a classic. The characters are very believable and they have their own lives. Ender is the best developed character in *Ender's Game*. Ender has a life, family, and a background. With that base of knowledge, Card builds up the character of Ender, to the point that when you read *Ender's Game* you empathize with Ender. His thoughts and emotions almost become yours. The supporting characters are also very well developed. The other children at Battleschool have pasts. Though very few of the children ever mention their home, Card subtly hints at their backgrounds. Their emotions, opinions, and reactions seem real and very much believable. Ender's brother and sister are also well developed characters. Card shows how they eventually take on the personality traits of their "pen personalities", an interesting process.

So, in conclusion, *Ender's Game* is a masterpiece of science fiction. Combining an intriguing plot with well developed characters, Card made a truly classic novel. While *Ender's Game* will be long remembered as a masterpiece of science fiction, Card's characters will be remembered even longer in the hearts of whoever reads *Ender's Game*.

Things Fall Apart, by Achebe Chinau

~review by Ann

Two Times is Always Better Than One

Have you ever read a book without getting the point of it? If so, did you reread it and realize that you just missed a few clues to the moral of the story? Well, if you like that type of story, then *Things Fall Apart* is the book for you. The novel, *Things Fall Apart*, is a well thought out and well-written book. The novel demonstrates how one significant change in a community can make everything go askew. I would recommend this book for readers who are seeking a thought-provoking and mature book.

Things Fall Apart is an African story that describes one man's attempts to keep the village's customs from being changed by the invading Christians. The book is mature and thought-provoking, which means it doesn't spell out the moral of the book for you. It gives you clues throughout the book, so the author, Achebe Chinau, can surprise and wow the reader in the end. He gives Christian readers a new perspective of non-Christian's views of missionaries and their often-invasive method of spreading Christianity. As a reader, the book is a wonderful mixture of African faith, agriculture, and home life. It takes you inside a family and village to witness the corruption of Britain's colonization of Africa. As the abrupt colonization creeps into the village, you can see how it slowly and gradually makes things fall apart.

In conclusion, as things in one African community are falling apart, Achebe Chinau creates a well thought out and well-written book, which I would recommend for any reader who is seeking a mind-provoking story. So, if you like thinking deep thoughts and exploring them in a mature way, go to the library of Barnes and Noble and get *Things Fall Apart*. It would definitely be worth your time and effort...Even if you have to read it twice!

The Bean Trees, by Barbara Kingsolver

~review by Beth

A Leap of Faith, a Little Love, and a Life Lesson Learned

To be a good book, or not to be a good book; that is the question. *The Bean Trees*, by Barbara Kingsolver, is the most interesting book I've read. Its intricate plot keeps the wheels of your mind turning, and its colorful characters keep you in suspense. The book is about a girl from a small town who sets out on a journey to have a life of her own. *The Bean Trees* is full of adventure, suspense, and so much more. I think *The Bean Trees* is a must read novel, because it is full of faith, love, and life lessons.

If you were in the middle of nowhere, all alone, and a woman came up to you and literally put a little girl in your arms and walked away, what would you do? When Taylor Greer is put in the same situation, it takes a huge leap of faith to do what she does. She takes the little girl and continues on her journey. Little does she realize this girl will change her life forever. Another leap of faith in this story is Taylor's decision to leave home in the first place. All her life, she has lived in a small, rural, Kentucky town, but one day, she suddenly decides that she wants a new life. So she packs her bags and embarks on a life-changing journey. Without the ineffable amount of faith Taylor has, she wouldn't experience love she shares with the people she meets.

Throughout the story, Taylor meets characters that forever change her life. The little girl who is handed to her that cold night brings hope and light into her life. The more she bonds with the little girl, the more of a mother she becomes. The feeling of unconditional love that a mother has for her child develops, and a footprint of the girl is forever left on Taylor's heart. Furthermore, Taylor meets many friends along the way that open their hearts and homes to her. They become closer, and their love, the kind you have for true friends, grows more and more. Just as love opens the door for new experiences, it also teaches important life lessons that Taylor learns throughout the story.

All the people that Taylor meets show her a different view on life. One of Taylor's friends teaches her that even when you have nothing in your pockets, the love in your heart will always get you by. This is very true, because Taylor has nothing when she arrives in Arizona, except the love in her heart, and she ends up getting along okay. Furthermore, Taylor learns that even when you feel down, and you have to depend on others, there is always someone depending on you, too. Taylor gets pretty down about things, and she sometimes forgets that her daughter, Turtle, depends on her no matter what. This helps Taylor realize that she is loved and that she needs to be a strong person, not only for herself, but for Turtle, too. Finally, Taylor learns that if you follow your heart, things will turn out for the best. This is true, because throughout the story, Taylor follows her heart, and even though things may not always seem good, in the long run, everything's okay.

In conclusion, *The Bean Trees*, by Barbara Kingsolver, gets two thumbs up in my book because of the quality of the story. This book shows you how much faith, love, and the lessons of life can impact and change your own life. After reading *The Bean Trees*, I wanted to bring more faith and love into my life. Don't you? Just remember, all you need is a leap of faith, a little love, and a life lesson learned.

Frankenstein, by Mary Shelley

~review by Brian

Criticized Creation of Mary Shelley

The giant creature walks into the room. His blood is dripping from the seams between his stitches. Elizabeth knows that this is going to be her final breath, and she takes it with a scream. When Mary Shelley first created *Frankenstein*, she didn't realize that she was about to change the meaning of the word scary. The book lit a flame that spread through the world of writing like a brush fire. After 1818, when the book was published, she sold thousands of copies of the book, and many different versions of the book were made. But, was Mary Shelley's first book all that great? Could it even compare to books nowadays? I believe that the book, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, isn't very good at all.

To begin, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is an extremely unrealistic story, and the book has no scientific explanation. The book is a fictional book, so the plot line can be completely unbelievable, but the story line must make sense. When the monster is first created, Mary Shelley writes about using electricity to bring life forms back to life. Yet, she doesn't write a word on why the electricity would bring the creature back. The reason why the process works is not explained in the book. Also, the book lacks explanation of the background information of the characters. When the main character is introduced, there is some information on his childhood, but all of the other characters have no interesting past experiences. Not only does the story lack explanation scientifically and the sense that the plot could never happen in real life, but the story lacks excitement and fails to make the reader feel a part of the story.

In many books, the writer tries to get the reader to feel that he is in the book. The writer normally tries to do this with action and suspense. Unfortunately, the book has none of these three keys. Perhaps I am the only one that feels this way, but I never felt like I was in the main character's head; and not even once was I able to see through the victim's eyes. When a book doesn't do any of these few things, the story gets really boring. Another point that has to do with a book getting boring is that the book has very little to no action or suspense. This is the case for *Frankenstein*. The book is always mentioning, in extreme detail, irrelevant objects or purposeless actions of the characters. For instance; they are walking awkwardly. After reading scores of pages like this, the reader gets bored out of his brains. Also, only twice during the entire book is the story even somewhat suspenseful. And only once is there any action, and that didn't come until late in the story.

After reading the book, watching the movie, and doing a report on the story, I have come to the conclusion that Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is a poorly written book. In fact, I wish that I hadn't read the book at all. I feel that this book, which is lacking suspense, action, reader involvement, and realism, is a disgrace to all of the Frankenstein stories ever told. Mary Shelley really did create a beast when she made *Frankenstein*.

Giants in the Earth, by O.E. Rolvaag

~review by Chris

The Negative Remarks on Giants in the Earth

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to travel far away from home? Well, that's exactly what happens in *Giants in the Earth*, by O.E. Rolvaag. *Giants in the Earth* is a story about a large group of settlers from Norway traveling West during the 1800's. Their only goal is to survive. The settlers encounter numerous obstacles in the Dakota Territory, including resource shortages, harsh winter storms, and even swarms of locusts! In my opinion, *Giants in the Earth* isn't a very good book for the following two reasons: it is boring, and it is very depressing.

First, *Giants in the Earth* is boring. There is very little, if any, action. There is suspense in the story, but not enough to keep the reader interested the entire time. Also, the setting is very dull. There is no wildlife, just grass. The closest area where wild animals can be found is about half a day away on horseback. There are some trees planted on the property; however, the main character had to haul them to his place from far away. The trip taken to get the trees isn't described, either. It just happens. *Giants in the Earth* is also boring, because all anyone does in the book is work. There is always someone planting something or other. When there is nothing being planted, wood is being chopped, crops are being harvested, and/or the settlers are taking a week long trip to buy supplies in the nearest city .

The main character's wife doesn't help the situation, either. She is boring and depressing. All that she seems to talk about is how depressed, bored, scared, sad, and homesick she is. She seems to get a bit better; however, her encouraging condition doesn't last very long. This makes the story hard to read. As I read about how depressed she feels, I seemed to somewhat get down in the dumps. Depressing literature makes me depressed, too.

In conclusion, *Giants in the Earth* isn't so hot. The book is depressing and boring. If you like really long books with very little action, then this is the book for you. Although, it shows us what life would be like as an early settler, I feel that the author dwells too much on the wife's depressing mood swings. I'm sure that this book would appeal to a wider range of readers if it included less of the

wife's depressing thoughts, and more action. However, if you like really long, depressing books without much action, then this is the book for you.

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, by Douglas Adams

~review by Colin

In Space, No One Can Hear You Laugh

May 11th, 2001: People around the world heard the news and began to cry. A heart attack had claimed the life of Douglas Adams, leaving a void in the science fiction community that would be hard to fill. Adams, better known for the inaccurately named Hitchhiker's trilogy, made the world wonder, "What is the meaning of life? Is the universe truly safer if you bring a towel?" His book was so successful, that it was made into a radio series and a television series. Welcome to "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy."

"The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy," or "The Guide" (for short) was the first book to make us ponder the true meaning of life. According to "The Guide," a race of beings somewhere in the galaxy built a grand computer, which would tell them the meaning of life. Unfortunately for the men who created it, it only gave them the answer, not the question. It was on this note that the race of beings that we call "Mice" signed a contract with Magrathea, or the planet for creating planets, to build a planet/computer which would find the question to the meaning of life. What is the answer? To find out, read the book.

"The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" was made into a radio series and a television show. In 1978, Douglas Adams placed a radio program on Radio 4, entitled "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy." The show was such a success that Douglas Adams turned it into a series of books. (The inaccurately named five book "Hitchhiker's Trilogy") The books were such a success that in 1981, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) made a television series based on the books.

The last point I will cover is why the universe is safer if you bring a towel. A towel can serve many uses while touring the galaxy for less than thirty standard credits a day. If your ship is going to crash, you can use your towel as a distress flag when you need to. There are people in the galaxy who have found a way to grow food on their towels or get them to produce water. (Isn't that neat?) Lastly, if you want to, you can just use it to lay back in the sun.

In conclusion, Douglas Adams' book, "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy," is a great book that should be added to the list of classics, right up there with Tolkien, Hugo, and Heinlein. It makes us wonder what the meaning of life's question is. It was made into a television and radio show, and it explained why the universe is safer if you bring a towel. I will leave you with this bit of information: "When caught hitching a ride on a Vogon ship, under no circumstances allow a vogon to read poetry to you." If you want to know why, read the book. I think that Mr. Adams left behind a great legacy, wherever you are Mr. Adams, I salute you.

The Red Badge of Courage, by Stephen Crane

~review by Colin

"Classic?"

The Red Badge of Courage. ..should it be an American Classic? *The Red Badge of Courage* is about a young boy, Henry, who enlisted in the Civil War. He went off and fought in the war but didn't like it.

The Red Badge of Courage is an extremely difficult book to read, because it keeps switching plots and going through time without alerting the reader. It is very hard to read, because the reader isn't able to get into the book; they have to concentrate too much on what they're actually reading. Because *The Red Badge of Courage* is very hard, it is also uninteresting.

The Red Badge of Courage is a boring book, because the reader never learns what the characters or the settings look like; there is barely any physical description of the settings or characters. It is also boring to read, because it doesn't exactly tell the reader what is happening; it makes them wait until the action is done before it tells them what had just happened.

In conclusion, as an "acclaimed" book critic, I believe that *The Red Badge of Courage*, although considered an American classic, is too hard to read and is very dull. Most people would get easily frustrated and would want to stop reading it almost immediately. Therefore, I give *The Red Badge of Courage* one star out of five.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, by Lewis Carroll

~review by Dan

Alice's Horrific, Inappropriate, Stupid, Idiotic, Ridiculous Adventures in Wonderland

A caterpillar smoking a hookah? A girl changing sizes? Flamingo croquet? These are just a few of the moronic, stupid, pathetic things that you will find in the book *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, by Lewis Carroll. This book is so confusing; in fact, many people believe that Carroll was "high" when he wrote it. This book is so uninteresting, that it could have been written by a five-year-old, and I wouldn't be able to tell the difference. I believe this book is inappropriate for children, impossible to understand, and in many ways, an all-around horrible book!

If this book were rated, it would be rated R for content, and drugs many bad things go on in Alice's wonderland, many of which should not be seen, or read, by children. For example, a caterpillar smoking a "hookah" would today translate to someone smoking marijuana. Also, the Queen of Hearts continuously is telling people to behead other people, and at one point, Alice is to be beheaded. Even when I had just begun the book, it leaves you to believe it is okay to venture off or to drink out of bottles that have unknown contents in them. Kids could think of this and climb up into their parent's medicine cabinet, with the intention to make themselves smaller or larger. This book is so full of harmful things and ideas, I thought I should rent the Disney Movie to see what their interpretation of the book was. I consider myself a decent problem-solver, but I couldn't understand the movie, much less the book.

I can't put my finger on the reason I couldn't understand this book. It could have been because Alice changes places so often, meets countless characters, or just does idiotic things. After long thought, I have come to my conclusion. The reason that *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is so confusing is the author spends too much time describing one thing and not enough describing

others. He will describe his characters perfectly, but he doesn't describe the location. He seems not to describe traveling very well, either. He should have given more meaning to Alice's travels, including why she chooses to move on, and not stay, instead of allowing everything to build up in a confusing ball and just end.

In conclusion, if Carroll was trying to get *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* published today, I would, as an acclaimed book critic, make sure that it was never published anywhere, ever! I believe that this book is a disgrace. It goes against what parents have been teaching their children not to do. I, Dan, a literature lover, a great book critic, who is usually easy to please, would give this book two thumbs way down!

The Stranger, by Albert Camus

~review by Dan

The Book That Changed My Life

"All I can hope is that there would be a large crowd of spectators at my execution and that they would greet me with cries of hate." These words, spoken by Monsieur Meursault, the main character in *The Stranger*, would intrigue any reader. *The Stranger* written by Albert Camus, a French writer who has won the Nobel Prize for Literature, is a fiction book set in the lower part of France. It details the life of Monsieur Meursault, a peculiar character. *The Stranger* is a well-written piece of literature that has great morals.

The Stranger is a wonderfully written book. Not only does Camus have a unique style of writing, but he also uses a wide range of vocabulary throughout the book. Although you have to get used to the dialect, it is quite easy to understand. There are very few spots in the book where you get lost; Camus exceeds other writers in this way. One thing I especially liked about Camus' writing is the way he makes you think. Although I said that the book is quite easy to understand, that does not mean it can be read by anyone. Camus' writing is not always straightforward. A ten-year-old cannot just pick up the book and expect to understand it completely. Some adults may even struggle to understand, but that is what I like most. Camus also writes with a large vocabulary. You do not get bored with the writing; he always has a new way of presenting a situation or a scene. The wide range of vocabulary keeps you interested; it grabs your attention. Even though *The Stranger* is wonderfully written, it also has very good morals.

The Stranger provides a great set of morals for everyone who is caring and compassionate. Again, Camus' writing is not always straightforward. When you first finish the book you will not immediately realize what the author is trying to teach you. You may not even realize the intent of the book until well after you have finished. But after a short while, you will understand the lesson of the book. Camus presents all these "lessons" through the main character (Meursault) who lacks compassion, hope, and the will to live. He just does not care what happens to himself or the others around him. The sad part about this is that there are people like Meursault all around us. You realize compassion, and hope, and the will to live are not earned, they are given. Meursault never succeeds in finding these morals. The question is, when will you find them?

In conclusion, *The Stranger* is a very good book. It is wonderfully written, has a wide range of vocabulary, makes you think, and has great morals. I would definitely encourage you to read this awesome piece of literature. After finishing the book, I thought about things differently. May you realize the lessons of the book and let it change your life as well!

Fried Green Tomatoes at Whistle Stop Cafe, by Fannie Flagg

~review by Elise

Lessons Learned in Time

Have you ever been told to learn lessons from your mistakes and experiences? Almost everyone goes through life learning about themselves from the situations they encounter. There are many lessons learned in Fannie Flagg's book *Fried Green Tomatoes at Whistle Stop cafe*. In the beginning of the story, you are introduced to two of the main characters: Evelyn Couch, a depressed middle-aged woman, and an old woman, Mrs. Threadgoode. Mrs. Threadgoode lives in a nursing home and tells Evelyn stories of The Whistle Stop cafe. Two women run the Whistle Stop cafe in the time of the depression. These women, Ruth and Ildgie, experience many interesting events. Anyone who wants to learn a lifelong lesson, while enjoying an intriguing book, should read *Fried Green Tomatoes at Whistle Stop cafe*.

Ildgie, one of the main characters, sets an awesome example of why it is important to be yourself. She stands up for what she believes in and is not afraid to share what she's thinking. She teaches you that if you stay true to yourself, someone will love you. In the story, Ildgie falls in love with Ruth, who is married. When Ildgie discovers that Ruth is being abused by her husband, Frank, she finds a way to rescue Ruth and win her heart. Ildgie does this by being herself and making an effort to act upon what she believes in. The lesson that Ildgie teaches you is not the only one in the book. Mrs. Threadgoode helps Evelyn see herself for who she is, a wonderful person.

Mrs. Threadgoode helps Evelyn overcome depression. Evelyn has a tendency to over-eat when she is sad. As a result, she gains weight and becomes very unhappy with herself. She is also not pleased with the relationship she has with her husband, Ed. Mrs. Threadgoode acts as Evelyn's counselor. She tells the stories of Whistle Stop and shows Evelyn that it is okay to love herself for who she is. Mrs. Threadgoode shows her that it is not how other people see her but how she sees herself that is important.

In conclusion, I believe that this book is definitely worth reading. The lessons that Ildgie demonstrates help you find your place in the world without changing yourself. She teaches readers to believe in themselves and maintain their values. The lesson learned by Evelyn is very helpful when you are feeling worthless. It helps you realize everyone has something to contribute to society. *Fried Green Tomatoes at Whistle Stop Cafe* is an excellent novel; it's full of exciting lessons just waiting to be shared.

Flowers for Algernon, by Daniel Keyes

~review by Eric

To Read, or not to Read, Flowers for Algernon

Want to learn some of the secrets of life? Then read the book *Flowers for Algernon*, by Daniel Keyes. It is about a man named Charlie who is mentally retarded and is determined to become as smart as everyone else. A breakthrough in technology allows him to become the first human lab rat to have the operation. It is a wonderful book. *Flowers for Algernon* teaches a few good lessons about life, and if you stop to think about the book, you can learn a lot from it.

Flowers for Algernon can teach us to pay closer attention to the details of our lives. For example, before Charlie has the operation that makes him smarter, he feels that the men at his work are truly his best friends. They sometimes do things that confuse him, but he doesn't realize that some

of the things they are doing obviously mean they aren't his friends. We can all do the same thing that Charlie could have done; see what we have, and make sure it's what we want it to be. Because we are so stressed out these days, we often miss the obvious. If we wish to survive, we need to learn from Charlie's mistake; we need to take stock of our lives and refuse to allow others to take advantage of us.

Secondly, *Flowers for Algernon* can also teach us not to take things for granted. Early on, Charlie takes his friends for granted. Once he gets the operation, he sees that they are not really his friends but just people who constantly amuse themselves at his expense. This is an important lesson that I feel we all need to learn. Just because we think something is good doesn't mean it really is that way. Don't take everything for granted. Do not find yourself thinking that everything is positive, just because you want it to be that way. Look at both sides of the situation- the positive, and the negative- and see which is real. Don't assume that what you want to be real is real; check it out, and find out the truth. If something is negative, face the facts and don't pretend. Try to change that negative into a positive.

In conclusion, *Flowers for Algernon*, by Daniel Keyes, can teach us some important lessons about life. It can teach us to question the obvious and not take things for granted. The book is still an overall good book even if you don't want to learn some morals of life. So grab the book from your local library, take some time out of the constant rush of life, and read *Flowers for Algernon*. It's worth it.

Wuthering Heights, by Emily Bronte

~review by James

I have only just finished reading Emily Bronte's greatest and only work: *Wuthering Heights*. As I read this literary giant, I asked myself this question: Is this book really the greatest love story in the English language, as its dust jacket trumpets? Or is it just another 19th century English book? After considerable deliberation, I am forced to say "yes" to both.

There are many reasons, I am sure, for my mixed feelings about *Wuthering Heights*, the first and foremost being a hybrid mix of interest, suspense, sympathy, and pity. My interest in this book was generated by a very well constructed plot, which also enacted the suspense- that is, you catch yourself wondering what is going to happen next. The sympathy I experienced comes not only from my sympathy for the characters (so many of them lead such tortured lives), but also for the author, who died very young. I doubt Emily Bronte meant for that to happen. Pity is solely for the characters, who run through the rat race of 19th century life. It lends a melancholy air to the story, which is not all pleasant.

There were some points in *Wuthering Heights* that I found to be "sour notes" so to speak. *Wuthering Heights* is definitely not what I tend to think of when I hear "love story". My thoughts on the "love-effect" of the story were decidedly mixed. Bronte's characters, and their conduct, could sometimes be a little unsavory, undesirable. I expect Miss Emily set up that particular emotional trigger. But what displeased me even more was the story's ending, which, was she alive, the author might want to make a move to correct. Put simply, it ended on another one of those "sour notes". Another problem you may find with *Wuthering Heights* is that it is supremely difficult to get into. I found it so. But even as the first chapters bored me, I kept going, knowing that there had to be some reason so many people acclaimed Bronte's book before I got to it. In the end, I was rewarded with a very good story .

Unfortunately, though, *Wuthering Heights* does not deserve the title its dust jacket trumpets. The main reason is the convoluted plot. It has strange twists and turns that one would not expect in a love story, indeed, one would not accept in a love story. This may be because of my antiquated belief that love should be perfect.

Mind, though, and don't be too hasty to accept my beliefs as your own. Read the book very carefully first. I found myself saying "Perhaps I was too harsh..." and you may as well. This most certainly is a tender love story, even though it is, at times, vicious, cold, cynical, disagreeable, masochistic, etc. The love of two generations does penetrate even the most horrific of 19th century troubles making *Wuthering Heights* a slightly more modern *Romeo and Juliet*.

So, in conclusion, I must acclaim Emily Bronte's "magnum opus" as very haunting, very beautiful, and very great. It does, indeed, deserve its place as one of the great love stories of the world. However, I cannot say that it, nor any other, is the greatest love story in the English language- not 'till I've read them all, that is. But if you choose to read *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Bronte's haunting story of l'amour on the moor, you're in for a romantic Victorian treat.

Brave New World, by Aldous Huxley

~review by Jessie

Brave New World or Bad New World?

Brave New World introduces the reader to just that: a new world. A world without marriage, pain, or love. A world where babies are decanted, not born, and there is a caste system. Mr. Huxley writes about a futuristic world, yet some of the ideas don't seem that far away in time at all. *Brave New World* seems void of any real feeling, suspense, or excitement. It slowly plods through the lives of the citizens, realistically depicting dictatorship and censorship. I found *Brave New World* boring and pretty pointless, with an ending that made the reader feel like Aldous Huxley had just gotten tired of writing and slapped on any ending he could make. *Brave New World* has an intriguing beginning, but the book slowly becomes less and less interesting, ending in a very disappointing way.

The book starts out interesting, but it slowly gets worse and worse, becoming more boring as the plot weakens. The beginning is intriguing because it introduces the reader to a whole new way of life, where monogamy is a thing of the past and Henry Ford is the only deity the citizens know. The first chapter gives you a feel for the community. Then it starts to zoom into specific characters, following them through their daily lives. The author describes what a citizen in the "brave new world" regularly does in one day, which usually involves him or her in many mundane tasks. There is a lot of dialogue, but little action. Soon, a new character is introduced: "The Savage". Brought into the "civilized" world from the jungle, the Savage questions many things he sees in this new world, and eventually he causes an uproar. When the Savage is introduced, excitement and anticlimax build, only to begin another slow, downward spiral. Finally, there is the ending; a jarring, hasty end to the story. It leaves the reader flipping through the blank pages at the end of the book, thinking: "Where's the next chapter? That couldn't have been the end..." And yet it was...a quick end to a slow-paced book.

In conclusion, *Brave New World* is slow-paced and boring, with much dialogue and little action. It is a very sex-oriented book (with much of the communities ideas and activities revolving around pleasure) and doesn't seem to have a plot, other than following the lives of the citizens and the

Savage through this new world. The brave new world consists of no feeling, no real love or pain, only living to conformity every day, with sleep-taught rules and real-world-escaping soma tablets. The *Brave New World* is not brave at all, nor all that new. It is the nightmare, the fear in the back of one's mind- "What if we did conform to society?" Everyone more or less the same, in a world without feeling. "When an individual feels, the community reels," whispers the sleep teaching voice in the night. In a world where one can escape all pain in an instant. "A gram is better than a damn," the sleep teacher repeats. What if we became that *Brave New World*?

Like Water for Chocolate, by Laura Esquivel

~review by Katie

Soul Food for the Sweet Tooth

Food, romance, and death: What more could someone ask for in a book? *Like Water for Chocolate*, written by Laura Esquivel, is an intriguing tale about one woman's life and the hardships she overcomes. Defending herself against her mother, endeavoring with the one she truly loves, and attempting to find herself are some of the trials the main character endures. Unlike some books, this book is interesting and irresistible because of its wonderfully detailed descriptions, its great symbolism and the underlying message that everyone has the right to love.

First, *Like Water for Chocolate* has many vivid descriptions. Throughout the book, you can picture (or sense) everything that is written in your mind. For example, the descriptions of food preparation interwoven throughout the story are so vividly detailed, you can almost smell the meal cooking right in front of you. Also, the kissing that takes place between Tita and Pedro is described with such passion, that it makes your lips pucker. The author combines these clear descriptions with a liberal dose of symbolism to hold the reader's attention and encourage the reader to think beyond the words.

Symbolism is used often during *Like Water for Chocolate*. The author, however, lets the reader decide what it is that she is symbolizing, thus personalizing the book for each reader. For example, the title (*Like Water for Chocolate*) is very symbolic. It sums up the entire theme of the book, explaining the love and passion that each character has for another. They are like water for (hot) chocolate. This is a Mexican phrase describing emotions that are on their way to exploding. Another example of symbolism is the food prepared in the story. Each month, there is a new recipe that symbolizes the main character's emotions. The author's attempts to describe these emotions with words are unsuccessful, so she uses the food to express feelings. For example, when Tita is preparing the Chabela wedding Cake, she longs for a husband she can't have. The jealousy she experiences while preparing the cake is so strong, it essentially becomes an ingredient and everyone who eats it becomes miserable. The food has a direct effect on people. The description and symbolism constantly reinforce the underlying theme of the book, that to love and to be loved is the right of everyone.

Overall, *Like Water for Chocolate* is a powerful story that brings the reader into the book by using symbolism and detailed descriptions. I believe that everyone can see a little bit of him or herself in this story and not only learn important life lessons, but also discover his or her true inner self. This book is without doubt, soul food for the sweet tooth.

The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman, by Ernest Gaines

~review by Megan

Fictional, yet historical

Do you like stories that are adventurous and historical at the same time? If so, you should read *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman* by Ernest Gaines. This is a fictional book about a teacher who wants to interview Miss Jane Pittman, a 110-year-old former slave who had received her freedom with other slaves and was still alive to tell about it. This has proved to be a very entertaining, but at the same time, educational novel for many reasons.

One way this novel proves to be very entertaining is all of the different stories Miss Jane Pittman tells about her life. For example, she tells a story about how her and another slave's son, Ned, try to board a ferry boat in hopes of getting out of the Southern states. Neither of them have any money, so they try and talk their way onto the ferry. The captain (a white man) doesn't want to put up with them, so he yells at them and tells them if they don't have any money, they aren't riding on the ferry. All throughout this novel, there are many stories quite like this one, where, because people are black, they are not given the same privileges as white people. Most of Miss Jane Pittman's stories have to do with real situations that happened in the past, making it also a very educational story.

For anyone who isn't really sure what kinds of things went on during the Civil War or the Civil Rights Movement, this novel will help you to better understand the circumstances. For example, in the book, Miss Jane Pittman talks about what sort of things she goes through after being freed. Ned, the boy she cared for, wants to teach on one of the plantations that they work on. He opens a little school so that whoever wants to learn to read and write can. At the same time, the KKK, a racist group, tries to kill Ned for teaching. They burn down the schoolhouse and threaten to kill Ned. Miss Jane Pittman then tells Ned that he needs to leave before KKK can find him. Even though this novel is fictional, all the things that happened to the characters are based on things that really did happen during that time.

In conclusion, you can see that *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman* is both entertaining and educational. Ernest Gaines does a wonderful job of placing fictional characters in a non-fiction (historical) time period. If you love to read stories that are adventurous and historical at the same time, I highly recommend that you read *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman* by Ernest Gaines. It will be a story you will never forget!

Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant, by Anne Tyler

~review by Rachael

Having Dinner with the Tull Family at Homesick Restaurant

When the family you live with makes you livid, depressed, or even just plain tired, you know it's true what they say, "You can't pick your family, but you have to learn to live with them." Even if that's true, the book, *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* by Anne Tyler, certainly brings up things that make you wonder, "Do I really have to live with these people?" The book tells the story from a third person omniscient point of view, and each chapter is a well-written look back on memories of the family's troubles and fun.

When I first picked up the book, I wasn't sure what it would be like. But since I love family dramas and realistic stories, I really enjoyed it. In the book, there are lots of times when Pearl, the mother,

loses her temper, or gives up. Her children, though, always pull her through. Jenny, the youngest one, is spunky and pretty. She grows up to be very successful, even though she had very traumatic times with her family when she was growing up. Cody, the eldest, is very rebellious, and puts a strain on the family. Last of the children, Ezra, the middle child, is mommy's favorite. Ezra is kind and gentle. Can you pick out who would be who if it were your family instead of the Tull family?

Part of the reason this book is so good is that almost anyone, ordinary people like me and you, can relate to the stories. The troubles, emotions, and hardships are something all of us have gone through or will go through, in our lives. I loved the cynical humor the author uses in the book. She does a great job showing the emotions of the characters. Their personalities are well developed, and it feels like you get to know them as real people. To me, that is very important in books. Anne Tyler also does a good job of pulling the reader into the plot, and it's almost like she's sharing her story with you. (It isn't her story, but the way she tells it, it could be.) Their personalities are well developed and it feels like you get to know them. To me, that is one of the most important elements to a good book.

In conclusion, the book includes great character, emotion, and humor; all these make for one pretty amazing story. I just hope everyone gets the chance to read *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* by Anne Tyler. I promise you will laugh, cry; and be able to relate to the characters in the story, and you'll come to love the book. It might even help you through some of your family's troubles in the future!

Jane Eyre, by Charlotte Bronte
~review by Ryan

"Satisfaction Guaranteed"

What is your favorite kind of book? Is it intriguing to read an action-packed thriller? Or do you prefer sappy, romance novels? In *Jane Eyre*, a classic written by Charlotte Bronte, almost every type of genre can be found. The book is filled with utterly astounding comparisons and metaphors; the scenes literally construct themselves in the depths of the mind. Truly, this book is one of the most amazing and astounding gifts ever given to the world of literature because of its ability to satisfy the interests of almost anyone who reads it.

First, one of the main themes of the book is love. In the novel, love is portrayed in many different ways. From her birth, Jane, the main character, is brought up with her Aunt Reed and her cousins. The environment is one of a neglectful sort, and it causes Jane to become not only aware of the absence of love in her life from the very beginning, but also to develop an immunity to it. Slowly, throughout her life, she encounters foreign feeling and foreign feeling. She falls in love with her employer, and instant connections are sparked. But a dark, shadowy secret causes Jane to unwillingly take a step away from the love she has just been given, and her lover's secret jails her heart from any other love. He must find and rescue her, apologize, and unlock the barred jail cell door. Jane's lover's return is a surprising element, as the lover who once frightened her enters her life once again with a heartwarming and loving approach.

Another colorful element added to the book is fear. Jane's fright is exhibited towards her employer, Mr. Rochester, only mildly in comparison to other events in the story. Jane's employment requires her to stay with the family she governs for; she sleeps in a room on the second story of the

mansion she works at. But, when the midnight hour is close at hand, strange and eerie occurrences begin to take place. It begins with a cackle that pierces throughout the night air like an ax chopping wood and escalates to horrid ghouls with white gowns and maroon-purple faces invading her privacy by leaning their faces uncomfortably close to Jane's eyes. The fear of death captures Jane, as she is witness to the house being charred twice in under a year. Many a horrible secret is unlocked to reveal a most horrid and frightful plot that will make the reader ponder life and death.

In conclusion, the book of choice is *Jane Eyre*. Jane's morale and the book's many topics give in an aura like none other. Whether drama, horror, love, or even acceptance is your preference, all are found in just one book. Fill your thirst for amazing literature; gulp this book straight down!

Ordinary People, by Judith Guest

~review by Sarah

"Ordinary" People, True Emotions

Perfection: Is that the only possible way you can ever be truly happy? We all know that no one can be perfect. Making mistakes and learning from your mistakes is just another part of life. In the book, *Ordinary People*, by Judith Guest, a young man named Conrad takes you through the struggles and hardships he faces on his journey to live up to his brother's perfection. This book takes you inside the life and mind of someone who faces great family loss, suicide, broken friendship, and divorce. This is an amazing story and one that everyone read. The author, Judith Guest, does a wonderful job of putting feeling and life into words. *Ordinary People* was a great book, because it gets you inside the main character's head and helps you feel and understand what it would be like to go through all of the things Conrad goes through.

Have you ever been so pressured and overwhelmed you felt the only way out was death? Judith Guest takes the reader into the suicidal mind of the books main character, Conrad. Conrad is forced into counseling after a tragedy occurs in the family, and it almost sends him over the edge. I actually began to feel the anxiety that Conrad goes through. When Conrad gets help from a counselor, he starts to sort through his problems. The depression starts to lift off his shoulders, and he begins to live again. Though the book does not have an uplifting plot, nor a happy ending, I learned many great lessons that were well worth the sadness. The reality of Conrad's horrible life made me more appreciative of my own life. It also made me more understanding of those who are going through tough times. Judith Guest captures real emotion through her portrayal of the characters.

In conclusion, I truly enjoyed the book *Ordinary People*. It is realistic, informative, and touching. This book will stay with me for all of my life. It has taught me many life lessons and made me more understanding and compassionate towards others. Judith Guest put feeling into words, and she did it beautifully!

Animal Farm, by George Orwell

~review by Steve

Pigs, Cows, and Governments Gone Bad

Watch out! Bad governments lurk around every corner. Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Soviet Union were all governments gone bad. I read the book *Animal Farm*, by George Orwell. *Animal Farm* is a story about a rebellion of animals against their farmer. After the rebellion, though, they become worse off than they were before, forcing their community to tyranny. *The Animal Farm* is a good book, with just the right amount of action and many lessons to learn.

Animal Farm has just the right amount of action to keep the reader involved. For example, there are several gruesome scenes involving substantial activity. I especially enjoyed when they came unexpectedly; for example when the dogs start ripping apart other animals for doing things wrong, I was totally surprised. Also, the action of the book made me realize that it wasn't just another boring story about government. Aside from the action of *Animal Farm*, there are many important lessons to learn. *Animal Farm* teaches a variety of significant societal lessons. One lesson is that if you give someone too much power, they can become a tyrant. When the animals of *Animal Farm* give their complete trust to Napoleon, he became a tyrant. Another poignant lesson is that communism doesn't work. Communism has never worked in history. This book shows, in detail, how a communist government can go bad.

In conclusion, *Animal Farm* is a good book. In addition to teaching many lessons, *Animal Farm* is a fun book to read that is full of action, suspense, sorrow, and hatred. So, if you want to learn some lessons and have a little fun, this is the book for you!

ARTWORK

You sure see some characters at the library these days!

~Emily

