



Leon and the Spitting Image

Allen Kurzweil, Bret Bertholf (Illustrations)

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This book is about a hotel full of animals. And an evil ice maker. And glass eyeballs -- oh, and really old panty hose and Possibly Fake Hair. But mostly, it's about Leon Zeisel and his epic quest to survive fourth grade, despite his teacher, Miss Hagmeyer, and his archenemy, Lumpkin the Pumpkin, a human tank with a deadly dodgeball throw. Luckily, Leon has friends who will stand by him even if his magical plans for rescue and revenge involve ... SPIT!

Leon and the Spitting Image Details

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From Reader Review Leon and the Spitting Image for online ebook

Concetta Kellough says

This book had likable characters and it was quite funny. I think most kids who are middle elementary (4th-5th grade) would enjoy it.

Carissa says

i've been attracted to the cover of this book for awhile, but am just now getting around to reading it. it's about a kid who has poor "fine motor skills" and who despairs when he learns that his fourth grade teacher is going to teach them all how to sew by hand with a needle and thread. all year long. it's a cute little story with a bit of voodoo thrown in. i was especially fond of the main character's "taxi driver collection" where he takes note of where each of his taxi drivers is from and then puts a pin on a map at home for each new location.

Cindy says

Leon and the Spitting Image (Paperback)
by Allen Kurzweil
Cindy Xu

I think everyone who reads Leon and the Spitting Image can relate to it because it is all about a boy who struggles with his new year of school and with his strict teacher and he thinks is the worst teacher in the world. A young boy, Leon starts his fourth grade year with a bad start. In the beginning he struggles to find out what was written in his hidden confidential report. Soon as he starts his fourth grade year he encounters his new teacher Miss. Hagmeyer and starts off on the wrong foot with her. Miss. Hagmeyer who wears old panty hoses and possibly fake hair is going to make the life of Leon Zeisel miserable.

You would never guess what this terrible teacher is making the students of Leon's class do... they have to make DOLLS! This shocked me too, like what teacher makes their students knit dolls? Well, Leon struggles to make the dolls and is really scared that he would fail the grade because he can't knit a decent doll. And in his class Lumpkin the Pumpkin makes him unable to survive!

Luckily, Leon has friends who will stand by him even if his magical plans for rescue and revenge involve ... SPIT! He is going to get Miss. Hagmeyer with his devious plan. Control the teacher through the doll that he makes? Is that even possible? At the end you all learn a big secret about Miss. Hagmeyer, it would blow your mind!

Katie says

I really liked the first half of this book. It was totally plausible, yet creative and I really enjoyed the characters. The story took a weird turn about halfway through, which I didn't love, but we continued listening and it was still all right. We listened to this in the car and it was 5 CD's, which is a little long for my younger 2. My older 2 boys both really seemed to enjoy it though.

Pandaluff says

2nd favorite book ever! Don't be fooled by the cover, the book is really good and funny!

I think the author is very creative and has a great sense of humor! If you've already read this book, read the sequel, "Leon and the Champion Chip"

YOU WILL NOT REGRET IT!!

Sharon says

Excellent children's book that adults will enjoy. It's about a fourth-grader who lives in a hotel with his single mom, and has a fascination with geography. He learns about the world by asking his taxi drivers where they are from, then tracks their origins on his map at home. He has a couple of good friends, one mean teacher who makes her students learn how to sew and make strange animals, and one bad bully. But what happens at school is nothing short of magical.

Pamela Huxtable says

This is an inventive story that reminded me at times of the absurdity of Roald Dahl. Leon is a clumsy fourth grader who attends a school that emphasizes fine motor development. To a kid with coordination issues, this is a nightmare. Fourth grade starts, and Leon's teacher uses sewing to teach throughout the entire school year. A kids' book with a focus on sewing? Sounds odd, but it works.

Add to this the general quirkiness of Leon's life: he and his mother live in a hotel that caters to the nuttier side of trade conventions, an evil ice machine, and Leon's taxi driver collection all add to the fun, lighthearted tone of the book. Kurzweil manages to keep the tone light while addressing some of the issues that elementary school kids face, such as bullying, difficult teachers, negotiating with friends, and subtler themes of morality, justice, and retribution.

Terrific kids novel, probably best for older elementary ages. If you enjoy Roald Dahl, this would be a good choice.

Beth Butler says

This was a fun book about a struggling 4th grader. A typical kid struggles with a perceivable mean teacher and a bully in his class. The creativity of the story was wonderful. The kids had to spend 4th grade learning to sew and learning about medieval times. All sorts of silly things woven into the story made it a pleasure to read. (and increase your knowledge of geography just a bit)

Terry says

When I first started this book, I was like ... sewing? A book about sewing?!? That seemed a little odd. But the author did some pretty cool stuff with the sewing (which I won't tell you, lest I spoil the end!). The only reason I didn't give this ***** is because I thought the author could have done a little better foreshadowing of what was to come in the middle/end of the book earlier on, so it wasn't such a shock. But, I liked the unusual aspects that the author put it. I only wish that I could have done what Leon did when I was in 4th grade! This would be a fun read for kids in mid-upper elementary who enjoy humorous stories.

Vivian says

Imagine you must create an art project for a year-long unit on the middle ages and yours surprisingly takes on a life of its own.

I absolutely loved this story. I admit to be taken in by the year-long thematic study of the middle ages, a personal favorite subject for me and my children. As a home-schooling mom I thought this a brilliant idea.

A friend of mine read this and was bothered about something, I can't say now what, so enter with caution. This may not be for everyone. Leon is a fourth grader.

07TyraN says

Leon and the spitting image by Allen kurzweil is a fantastic book to read with only three hundred and two pages, its full of excitement and laughter through the whole book! The main charaters are leon ,bhis friends and Miss Hagmyer.The basic story is that leon barley passes 3rd grade and is trying to do well his fourth grade year, but he has a problem this fourth grade teacher miss Hagmyer is a evil lady that dresses in black and only cares about sewing. The conflic is when he makes a doll that might make his passing grade into 5th grade. somthing happends to the doll and everything falls apart.My favorite part of this book is when he meets his teacher for the first time and her room is full of glass eyes and other materials used for sewing and he gets scared.My least favorite part is the big surprise at the end, i thought the end came to soon.I recommend this book to people who love to laugh and have a little fun. :)

Angela9600 says

I wish I had listened to these in order but either way- I really enjoy this author and this series.

Kass says

I read this when I was a kid. I never got this book at all. In other words:
My 10-year-old self: "cofuzzling, me no get?"

Instead of actually *reading* the book, as the purpose of all books, I just defaced it.

-Wrote some nasty words here in there

-Scrawled out some sentences and drew pictures.

- DOODLED. oh yaaaaaaah.

Yes, I was in my naughty stage.

After those necessary changes were made, all my classmates deemed it easier to read. I think Mr. Kurzweil could use my graffiti talent to improve his books.

This book had a lot of weird, queer, WHAT THE-, and *Je ne comprends pas?* moments. Want an explanation? WELL, obviously, it's about a young school boy named Leon. He lives in a Hotel (I'm jealous). This boy is NOT NORMAL. He has a really wild imagination....or maybe his teacher does have eyeballs in glasses? I don't really want to find out...

Kelly Lynn Thomas says

I "read" the audio book, and loved it. Leon is such a likeable character, and the story is fun. The book seemed really long to me and I was shocked halfway through when the doll Leon makes suddenly gets magical powers, but it's based enough in the real world (like the first half) that I could swallow it and still enjoy the story. Nothing against fantasy, just the first half of the book is totally mundane. The ending is also satisfying.

Melki says

spitting image *noun* [From Middle English. See spite. Date: circa 14th century] Perfect likeness of a person; an exact image. Some experts think that "spit" is a corruption of "spirit." Others maintain that the phrase invokes magic - that armed with a sample of someone's saliva ("spit") and a doll made to resemble the person ("image"), a sorcerer could cast all-powerful spells on a hapless victim.

Leon goes to a strange school where they place *great importance on fine motor skills*, and his new teacher, Miss Hagmeyer, is all about sewing. In her class, *spool work is schoolwork*, and the students spend a great deal of time making stuffed animals, or *animiles*, as the teacher calls them. What's up with that?

This was an unusual read. The back cover of the book offers no synopsis, but from the oddly shod foot on the cover, I assumed the story involved a boy discovering that his teacher was a witch. Well, Miss Hagmeyer is *something* like a witch . . . though it starts with another letter of the alphabet. And, she definitely is not fond of Leon. I was, however. He's bright and funny, and he lives in a hotel where his mom is a concierge.

The story . . . well, I'm still not sure about that; the star-count rose and fell as I turned the pages.

This book, like every book I read, started out at four stars. I loved the premise, and was curious about what was to come. At around the halfway point, Leon creates his ultimate stuffed *animile* - a spitting image of

Miss Hagemeyer - which he discovers can be used like a voodoo doll to make her do his bidding. My interest level and rating dropped to three stars. It got even worse when Leon and his pals attempt to use the doll to get revenge on the class bully, and end up starting a cafeteria food fight. Kids may love this part, but I was yawning. At this point, I even considered giving up on the book, but I'm glad I didn't because the ending was even better than the one I'd been hoping for.

So, back to four stars for Leon and his teacher, who it turns out is not a witch, but *just a weird, cranky, out-of-date curiosity in need of special handling*. Kind of like a lot of people I know, including yours truly. Come to think of it . . . I do enjoy making stuffed *animiles*, I mean, animals . . .

Cassandra says

Leon hat für arbeiten mit Nadel und Faden nichts übrig um so härter trifft es ihn, dass die neue Lehrerin, die nebenbei bemerkt wie eine Hexe aussieht, völlig versessen aufs Nähen ist. Plötzlich ist Leons Versetzung gefährdet und zu dem wird er auch noch von seinem Klassenkameraden Lumpkin gemobbt.

Das Buch hat viele skurrile Einfälle. So lebt Leon mit seiner Mutter in einem Hotelzimmer, wo ihn in der Nacht die Eiskönigin vom Schlafen abhält. Ein bisschen unheimlich, ein wenig zauberhaft, so sieht das neue Schuljahr für Leon und seine beiden Freunde aus. Motivierendes Zitat aus dem Buch 'Leidenschaft und Übung. Verbindet beides, und ihr werdet jedes Mal ein Wunder vollbringen.'

Kendra says

Read this aloud with my 9 year old. It's a fun romp that cares not for how some might find the fantastical parts of the story (characters go to a quirky private school for which the motto is, "Nimble fingers make for nimble minds"), and the supernatural turn. The oddness of some characters (Leon, the Coach, his teacher, his taxi driver) makes the rest of the characters (his own friends, the principal, the "bully") seem flat by comparison, merely there to drive the plot, rather than enhance it. But authors of middle grades fiction find a winning combination of the fantastical and the caricature of character, so we just took it in stride. And it's just silly sometimes, which is just right for a 4th grader. Just picked up the sequel at my 9 year old's request.

Susan says

I don't know if I liked this book or not. It had some good lessons and some very funny parts, but there were also quite a few things I didn't like. For example, I didn't like the fact that the bully usually got away with hurting other people and their property. When a teacher caught him, he was not punished, but just told to stop. I didn't like Miss Hagemeyer. A teacher would never get away with the way she treated her students, especially the name calling and threats. However, I'm not a fourth grader, and a 10 or 11 year old might really like the book.

Tara says

Leon goes to a "classical" school and isn't doing well with coordination skills. School has just started and his new teacher is all about sewing. Classroom projects are about sewing stuffed animals named "animiles". Everyday she wears "eyeballs" that coordinate with the upcoming projects. Can this class get any weirder? (Yes)

Savannah says

I would recommend the book Leon and the Spitting Image by Allen Kurzweil. This book is funny. It follows Leon and his classmates, and it tells you what Leon thinks, hears, and sees. This book has a second book after it following the adventures of Leon, the main character. The book is called Leon and the Champion Chip. Leon and the Spitting Image's story line could be similar to another book, but I haven't read one yet. This book would be geared towards children and adults ages 10 and up. This book has some advanced vocabulary in it that younger readers may not understand unless reading with an adult.

Leon and the Spitting Image takes place at The Classical School which is where Leon goes to school. This book also takes place at the Trimore Hotel where Leon's mom works, and where they live. School is where Leon has all of his troubles. His troubles include Mrs. Hagemeyer, Henry Lumpkin, and animiles. At the Trimore Hotel Leon has his kind mother, his helpful friend Maria, and Frau Haffrenreffer. There are many themes to this story, but one of them is sleep can help you work better. Another theme is with hard work and drive you can conquer any challenge.

Leon is the main character of the book. He has troubles at school with a bully, and his evil teacher. At home Leon has a loving caring mother, and many friends to help him through the 4th grade. One of Leon's best friends is P.W., he is the friend that comes up with the plan, and loves action. P.W. is all about revenge, and experiments. Leon's other best friend is Lily-Matisse. She is more of the careful one, when they do the experiments she is always in lookout. She also doesn't like to get caught. Out of the friend group she is the logical one. When P.W. wants to do an experiment she always makes sure it's logical, and they won't get in trouble.

Leon's mother, Emma Zeisel, is a hard working mom who works at the reception desk at the Trimore Hotel. She works days and nights, but is always supportive of Leon, and his school work. Also at the Hotel is Leon's friend, and his mom's co-worker Maria. She is the maid, but when she has time she loves to sew. In the lobby of the Trimore is a bakery. The baker is Leon's friend, Frau Haffrenreffer. She makes amazing pastries that everyone loves. Lastly, there is Leon's favorite cab driver is Napoleon. He'll pick up Leon from school and drop him off since the bus doesn't go by the Trimore. Leon will talk to him about his day, and he will try to cheer him up.

At school Leon hates, and tries to avoid at all costs is the school bully, Henry Lumpkin. He is the most rude to Leon, but the whole class is scared of him, and nobody likes him, therefore he has no friends. Next, is the teacher, Mrs. Hagemeyer. She can hear anything, and everything. She is also obsessed with sewing. Through the book she makes them do a number of different projects. In her class there are some very strong feelings about her. Mrs. Hagemeyer is my favorite though because of a surprise at the end of the book, you'll have to read to find out what it is. Lastly Coach Kasperitis is the gym teacher, and the only teacher Leon likes. He has a problem with chewing tobacco, but that rarely bothers anyone. Leon even has trouble in gym class because of Lumpkin, he always whips Leon with the hardest dodgeballs in gym.

Overall this book is great, and I definitely recommend reading it. There are some relatable characters. In Leon and the Spitting Image it is very easy to create favorite, and least favorite characters. My favorite part of this book is that it's taken from the students perspective, and the whole story in general is very relatable

for me being in 7th grade. I love this story, it has many twists and turns, and feel good moments. In this book it isn't predictable, and anything can happen at any time. I can't wait to read Leon and the Champion Chip.
