



# Summerhouse Time

*Eileen Spinelli , Joanne Lew-Vriethoff (Illustrator)*

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Every year a rented pink cottage full of family, swapping stories, and riding waves mean Summerhouse Time for Sophie. Best of all is sharing a room with her favorite cousin and laughing and trading secrets like two happy peas in a cousin pod. Sophie can't wait! But when she asks the now-a-teenager Colleen if she's looking forward to their time together, Colleen just says "I guess so."

What? It's the best time of the year, the time they both love. In just a little bit, they will all be together in the cottage on the beach. Will this year be just as wonderful, just like always?

Accompanied by charming black-and-white illustrations, classic growingup experiences radiate throughout the pages of this sunny, anytime story.

## Summerhouse Time Details

Date : Published May 22nd 2007 by Knopf Books for Young Readers (first published 2006)

ISBN : 9780375840616

Author : Eileen Spinelli , Joanne Lew-Vriethoff (Illustrator)

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## From Reader Review Summerhouse Time for online ebook

### Ana says

I just love the worlds that Eileen Spinelli creates through her writing... the cozy environments and the close bonds between family members she describes so simply and yet beautifully in her poems... the joyful feelings all of these mental images evoke in me. I truly cherished the time I got to spend with this book.

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### babyhippoface says

A nice, quick read written in free verse and extolling the blessing of family to help you through the hard times.

Sophie is a terrific character--kind, patient with her younger cousin Tammy, just on the verge of "young love," and loving life. And what a terrific family. I realize the whole "extended family loves each other and all get along" scenario might seem a little "out there" to some people, but there really are families like that out there. Spinelli's is one, as she mentions on the back jacket flap. Mine is another, so I enjoyed the family dynamics here, even if most problems were generally wrapped up in a page or two.

And I liked this book, I really did, but not as much as I liked Eileen Spinelli's other recent book written in free verse, *Where I Live*, which I LOVED.

Joanne Lew-Vriethoff's illustrations are nice. I like them just fine; they add appeal and help break up the text and maintain interest (i.e., kids will like this book better because it has good pictures). But from the very beginning I knew that I would like *Summerhouse Time* more if Matt Phelan had illustrated it. I adored his drawings for *Where I Live* (can you tell I'm a fan?) and couldn't help but compare the two in my head.

Still, kids, who are the intended audience, after all, should enjoy reading this one. The illustrations are nice, and the free verse makes it seem like an "easy read."

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### Lucy says

This book was very touching. I could really relate to how Sophie felt. It was amazing to see how their summer was rocky at first, but soon became the best summer ever.

Sophie and her family go on a trip every summer. They call it Summerhouse Time. Her cousins join her, and they always have a good time. Sophie hates change, so when things don't go as smoothly as always, she gets worried.

Her favorite cousin Colleen is angry with the world, her Aunt loses her job, and her dad is acting funny. To top it all off, Sophie is in love with Jimmy, the new boy across the street.

Read this book to see Sophie learns to live with change, and that it can be a good thing after all.

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## **Krista the Krazy Kataloguer says**

In this novel in verse Sophie's much-anticipated annual trip with her family and relatives to the Summerhouse on the beach is spoiled by her cousin Colleen's withdrawn behavior, her father's illness, and other unexpected situations. What I really liked about this story is the idea at the end that we tend to idealize events of the past, and gloss over in our memories anything negative that may have happened to mar them, when, in reality, nothing is ever completely wonderful or completely bad. Sophie realizes (p.205):

maybe even Summerhouse Time  
hasn't been as perfect  
as I remember.

I suppose it's also a warning not to anticipate anything too much, lest it never live up to what you imagine it will be, and therefore suffer disappointment. Great story!

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## **Anvi says**

I really liked the book because of the setting.  
usually whenever the setting is about summer it's very exciting.  
I liked the characters too. I would recommend this book to anyone who likes books about poems

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## **Erin Forson says**

Summerhouse Time  
By Eileen Spinelli

When I was younger my family used to go and hang out at family get-togethers, cook out, and go to amusement parks. I had older cousins who were my BFFs, and then suddenly, it's like they outgrew me and didn't want anything to do with me; I never could understand that. And neither can Sophie. Every year her family joins the rest of her cousins and aunts and uncles at a beach house, and they pretty much party the summer away. But things are changing, and Sophie worries that the cousin she loves so much is lost to her. The novel is written in verse--which means unrhymed poetry. There are very few words on each page. Therefore, the novel is a breeze to read through in very little time. Beachcombers, especially girls, will chuckle their way through this read.

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## **Angela Kidd Shinozaki says**

A sunny, fun quick read filled with humor and just a touch of melancholy. Like a great big family reunion memory stuck between the pages. I did find it a little hard to keep track of all the relatives, but I suppose that is typical of any big family ;-) And although I liked the short, free verse poems that make up the story, sometimes I was left feeling like there were details I was missing. But all in all, a great summertime, beach blanket book!

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**Sara Truog says**

Delightful juvenile novel in verse about a girl's favorite time of year: the summer, when she goes on a beach vacation with her extended family. Loved this, found it a quick read that reminded me of my own summer vacations with family, and am planning to read it with my library book club this August. I'm afraid the boys will stage a mutiny, however - there's a little bit of girly first love sort of stuff...

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**SRT Lotrario says**

I will give you a summery they go to stay at there summer house but sophies best cousin has been acting weird she loses her cat what could be worse will she have a fun summer or will it be the worst.

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**Ann Williams says**

An oldie but a goodie. I could relate to the setting as I love to go to our beach house. There are many talk worthy points in this story which could lead to some pretty interesting persuasive essays.

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**Adelissa says**

This has to be one of the best books I ever read, and I am a thirty something year old woman! It actually made me tear up. I think anyone from about age 8 and up could find something to enjoy about it. Made me wish I had such a big loving family. There are sad parts, funny parts, and just the author has a true gift at making every character come to life and you really feel you are there with them as they enjoy their summer vacation, though there are some bumps in the road. This book was in my purse and I had to take it back to the library for my daughter and I had some time to spare waiting on stuff so I decided to read it and I am so glad I did. Took me about 45 minutes cover to cover. Such a sweet book I can't even say enough about it.

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**Kellie says**

Another of those "hidden gem" books I discovered at work. I actually saved this book from being withdrawn for non-circulation by checking it out. :D

I liked this. Sophie is a sweet character, and after everyone gathered at the summer house, the reader really starts to feel like a part of the family.

My one complaint was I felt that Sophie's dad's panic attacks weren't explained enough as to the reason he was having them in the first place. Why was he having stress and anxiety? It started before he was even at the summer house.

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## **Katie Fitzgerald says**

Summerhouse Time is a novel in verse about a girl named Sophie, who is counting the minutes until she and her family go to their summer house for the month of August. She's looking forward to hanging out with her cousin, Colleen, who was her best friend last summer, and she thinks a vacation will help her dad, who seems really stressed.

When she gets to the summer house, however, things are not exactly as Sophie expected them to be. Colleen isn't interested in hanging out with her at all, and Sophie's stuck hanging out with her little cousin Tammy instead. On top of that, her aunt and uncle are arguing, and her dad still seems quiet, withdrawn, and worried.

The only bright spot is her correspondence with a new boy in her neighborhood back home, Jimmy, with whom she made fast friends before leaving for the month.

Will Summerhouse Time ever be the same?

I felt sort of neutral about this book as I was reading. I really like novels in verse, but after reading *The Dancing Pancake* a few months ago, this book didn't feel like it covered anything different. Both are stories of girls witnessing change in their lives and trying to cope with it. Bindi in *The Dancing Pancake* was perhaps more spirited and proactive than Sophie, but both girls experience similar emotions and challenges.

What I did like about *Summerhouse Time*, though, was the way every single character came to life, and had a distinct personality. This is a book with a lot of people in it, but they never got mixed up in my mind. I also really liked the little moments, such as Sophie teaching her cousin Cooper not to fear water, Tammy introducing her stuffed animal to her hermit crab, and the family gathering around to tell spooky stories. The warmth of Sophie's extended family really comes through, even when they're having difficulties, and it made me understand why Sophie is so disappointed to see that the *Summerhouse Time* she remembers might be gone for good.

This was a really good, fast-paced summer read, and I think girls in grades 4 through 6, especially, will really enjoy it.

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## **Carissa says**

this is a nice, light little poetry-prose book about a girl who is at that age when you realize that life isn't always simple and easy. nothing really terrible happens to her, but she just notices that life isn't perfect. i remember that summer in my own life. it was nice to read that perhaps the experience is universal. delightful summertime images as well.

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## **Dawn says**

Excitement builds for eleven-year-old Sophie as she anticipates her favorite time of year, summerhouse time.

Every August her mother, father, aunts, uncles and cousin rent a beach house for a month. This year though, things are different. Her father seems troubled, her favorite cousin ignores her and the boy that she thinks that she's in love with isn't writing her back (no email at the summerhouse) and she's learning Italian. Spinelli's story is filled with warmth and a true love of family. She perfectly captures the angst that occurs somewhere between adolescence and the teen years. Sophie's family is sincere and believable; situations are handled realistically and truthfully. Spinelli's writing floats on waves and warms you with rays of sunshine and the scent of saltwater. This is truly a wonderful story that has the reader wishing for his or her own "summerhouse time."

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