



Nasreddine

Odile Weulersse

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It's time to go to market, so Nasreddine loads up the donkey and sets off with his father. But when onlookers criticize his father for riding while Nasreddine walks, the boy is ashamed. The following week, Nasreddine persuades his father to walk, and let him ride -- but then people criticize the boy for making his father walk! No matter what Nasreddine tries, it seems that someone always finds something to disapprove of.

Nasreddine is a legendary character popular in stories told throughout the Middle East, and this clever story will bring him to a new audience. Accompanied by stunning artwork, this tale offers a gentle reminder to readers that it isn't always necessary to listen to the world's criticisms.

Nasreddine Details

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Author : Odile Weulersse

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From Reader Review Nasreddine for online ebook

Barbara says

As is often the case for many of us, Nasreddine allows the comments of those around him to affect his actions. When he and his father Mustafa go to the market, he tries walking behind the donkey, riding the donkey while his father walks, and riding the donkey with his father and their fowls, among other plans, but still onlookers make comments. When he suggests that they carry the donkey, his father reminds him that all comments are not worth paying attention to. After all, it's impossible to please everyone. The text and illustrations have great appeal and offer a firm reminder about how to navigate through life. I liked the quiet wisdom of Mustafa who lets his son make several mistakes before chiming in with his own advice.

Dimity Powell says

Full marks for this entrancing tale of a wise father, a small boy and his need to feel approval from those around him. A wonderful story full of charm and clarity supported by winsome illustrations that gently infuses understanding and reminds us all that often, it is better to not take every remark doled out on you to heart. When you choose not to listen to hurtful criticisms, you have nothing to fear. The Middle Eastern backdrop (Turkey) of Nasreddine's tale makes this experience all the more beguiling.

Angela says

Text to Self Connection: I have a memory of, after a difficult lesson, asking my mom, "But why didn't you tell me?" Her response was that she knew I was stubborn enough that some things I had to learn for myself. As offended as I was, I knew she was right, and this has stuck with me. Somethings we have to learn for ourselves--other things we need to accept from the wisdom of others so that we don't have to make the same mistake. I enjoyed reading how Nasreddine's father let him work through his problem on his own, in order to learn an important lesson, and then guided him when he truly needed it.

Questions:

1. What animal did Nasreddine and his father take with them as they traveled to and from town?
2. What lesson did Nasreddine learn from his experience?
3. If you had tried many ways to get to the market and were made fun of like Nasreddine, what would you have done? Why?
4. How would you contrast Nasreddine's father and the people who make fun of them? In other words, how are they different?
5. Do you agree with the lesson that Nasreddine's father teaches him? Why or why not?
6. What do you predict will happen the next time that Nasreddine and his father need to go into town?

Professional Review: (2013, May 1). School Library Journal. <http://www.titlewave.com/search?SID=8...>

Ilana says

Little Nasreddine is very concerned about what people have to say when he makes his way to the market to sell goods every week with his father and their donkey. No matter what he tries: riding on the donkey by himself, or with his father, or walking by the donkey's side, there are always people who make fun of them. When Nasreddine suggests perhaps they should try carrying the donkey the next time, his wise father teaches him a valuable lesson. Loved this book with a gem of a story and beautiful, deceptively simple illustrations by Rébecca Dautremer. ★★★★½ —*From August 2011*

Edward Sullivan says

A handsomely illustrated, fun tale about a wise fool taken from Middle Eastern folklore.

Jennifer B. says

Wonderful timeless tale about not giving a flying fig about what others think, because fault-finders will always find something to find fault with. It's what they do. What you do with it is up to you.

Kathy says

This review was written for LibraryThing Early Reviewers.

French author, Odile Weulersse, retells one of the varied tales of Nasreddine, told throughout the Middle East.

Nasreddine and his father, Mustafa, make trips to the market bringing dates, or wool from the sheep, carefully sheared by Nasreddine, or chickens. Everything is brought to the market on the back of their donkey.

On each trip someone makes a critical comment about father and or the son. The comments upset Nasreddine and send him home ashamed. Finally, Mustafa explains to him that people will always say things and that "you have to decide if what you hear from others is wise or silly and hurtful".

This book is illustrated by Rebecca Dautremer with delightful, colorful drawings of father, son and the donkey in varied Middle Eastern settings as they move from home to the market with their varied cargo. Every face has the perfect expression for their part in the story.

Classroom teachers, librarians and guidance counselors will find this to be an excellent book for further discussions and as a multicultural resource for programs and experiences. Additional variations on the Nasreddine legends would promote even more discussion. Art teachers will use this book for perspective lessons.

Finally, parents and children will find lots to talk about as they read and explore the illustrations together.

Alex (not a dude) Baugh says

Here is another wonderful folktale from the Middle Ages, believed to have originated in Turkey, which has a moral that is so appropriate for today's world. But isn't timelessness the beauty of folktales.

Every week, young Nasreddine and his father, Mustafa, take their donkey and bring their wares to the market to sell.

When they bring their dates to market, a vizier tells Mustafa he is lazy for riding on the donkey and making his son walk. His words cause Nasreddine to return home in shame.

When they bring the sheep's wool to the market, Nasreddine devises a plan so that he can ride the donkey. Once again, they face criticism from a group of women who call Nasreddine disrespectful to his father by making him walk. Again, Nasreddine returns home in shame.

It is time to sell the chickens at the next market day, and this time Nasreddine insists both he and his father ride the donkey along with the caged birds. Yet again, there is criticism, this time for being so cruel to the donkey by making it carry so much. Nasreddine returns home again in shame.

A few days later, when it is time to sell the watermelons at the market, Nasreddine suggests that he and his father walk and the donkey would only have to carry the fruit. But, soon they are being followed by a group of laughing kids. One finally asked why they are walking and not riding. Another answers it is because they are stupid. Once more, shame visits Nasreddine.

Finally, on the next market day, Nasreddine suggests to his father that they carry the donkey so that no one can make fun of them. But has Mustafa had enough of Nasreddine's ideas? Is it finally time to impart some fatherly wisdom to Nasreddine? Yes, it is and that is just what he does.

Here is a wonderful folktale that not only speaks to its young readers, but also to any adult readers reading to children. Mustafa has the patience to watch as Nasreddine's attempts to solve the problem of weekly criticism, waiting until the moment is right for his son to hear what he says. And Nasreddine's attempts to deal with the weekly comments and laughter he and his father are the brunt of add some humor to this tale, so it is an easier one for children to take in.

There is a note at the end of the book that although the story has been retold and probably changed over time, Nasreddine still offers its reader wisdom and delight, and that is so true in this version of the story.

I loved the mix of bold and soft watercolor used in the different illustrations and the way Daubremer used a white background and vivid bright colors to highlight Nasreddine and Mustafa at home, then switched to full page illustrations in more muted colors when they were heading to the market. The palette of colors used give the story a definite Middle Eastern atmosphere.

A new edition of Nasreddine has come out this year (2012), but the one I read was from 2005, but they seem to be identical.

This book is recommended for readers age 4+

This book was borrowed from the NYPL

This review was originally posted at Randomly Reading

Hayley says

Beautiful illustrations. Sweet, simple story with a wise message.

Maddie says

Nasreddine is of middle eastern descent, and every day, she travels into the great town square with her father, a donkey, and the goods they intend to sell. Every day, no matter how Nasreddine changes things up, the townsfolk always say mean things and disapprove of the way her and her father go about coming to the market. Father finally explains that everyone will have their own opinions no matter what way they make it to market. It's important to have pride within and do things because they make sense to you, not because you're following the dagger words of another than harm. A WONDERFUL book. Highly recommended because there are also some humorous moments.

Melissa Cooper says

A beautiful Middle Eastern folktale that shares the struggle many people feel in their efforts to please others. Nasreddine and his father's journey to and from the market highlight the young boy's efforts to change his ways. I loved that the father continues to humor him and lets him learn a lesson on his own, such perseverance. This book can be shared with a wide range of audiences and the illustrations truly highlight the message, old ladies looking down their noses or people snickering around corners.

Eris says

Cada vez que vengo a la FIL leo este libro, creo que me gusta mucho. Tiene una especie de sabiduría muy tierna.

Jota-p says

Uma história tradicional recontada num ambiente árabe, belissimamente ilustrada e que vale a pena ler e dar a conhecer aos mais novos. Devemos dar ouvidos às críticas dos outros ou devemos seguir o nosso caminho com a certeza da justeza dos nossos actos?

Ruth says

The illustrations follows the text on the page which helps the story along. I love the relationship between the father and son; He instructs his son gently, stating "do as you wish" each time his son listens to the negative comments of people in the village. Finally his son realizes the truth on his own. This tale teaches us that one , we have to discern the comments of others to see whether it is wisdom or folly and secondly the best way to teach someone a lesson is to let an individual learn through trial and error.

Emily says

I love the perspective of each illustration - the zoomed out, sometimes slanted view of Nasreddine and his father. Not having known that Nasreddine was a classic character in the stories of the Middle East, I kept waiting for there to be something amusingly wrong with the donkey, and then the boy and his father would, through that, determine their message. Still, though, I enjoyed it.

This was a selection for the Butler Center's Mock CaldeNott - considering only picture books for children published outside the United States. Even though I wasn't able to attend the discussion, I got hold of all ten of the shortlisted books and quickly devoured them.
