



The Wednesday Surprise

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Anna and Grandma are planning a surprise for Dad's birthday. Dad thinks he has received all his presents, but Grandma stands up and gives him the best one of all: she reads aloud the stories that Anna has taught her.

The Wednesday Surprise Details

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Author : Eve Bunting , Donald Carrick (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review The Wednesday Surprise for online ebook

L-Crystal Wlodek says

The Wednesday Surprise is intended for students in kindergarten through third grade. It is a School Library Journal Best Book of the Year and an ALA Notable Book (1989). This is a heartwarming story about a granddaughter and her successful efforts to teach her grandmother how to read as a birthday surprise for another family member. The importance of literacy, family, and love are all present throughout the book.

The main themes of the book are literacy, love, and family. The main focus of the book is on the lessons old and young share when they love, believe in each other, and learn to read each other's hearts. This heartwarming story of an unexpected birthday surprise of learning to read has a message about adult literacy and the importance of learning to read before you are an adult. The illustrations are beautiful and are done with watercolors, colors that are subtle, yet colorful. They compliment the story well and are the perfect addition in helping to support this story of a warm and loving family. This story would be best used in the classroom to when discussing or writing about the importance of family and learning how to read.

Meridith says

The Wednesday Surprise is a sweet family story that simply warms the heart. Every Wednesday Anna's grandmother comes to the house to watch her while her mother works late and her father is out on the road. Anna and her grandmother spend the evenings reading stories together and planning a special surprise for her father's birthday. Her father's birthday finally arrives and it is time for Anna and her grandmother to reveal their special secret. As the family gathers around Grandma begins to read a book. Mom and Dad and Sam are all astonished. Anna and her grandmother are glowing because their Wednesday surprise has wowed the whole family. Anna taught her grandmother how to read and now she might just read everything in the world!

Leave it to Eve Bunting to get the water works flowing through her heart felt story about family, love, and the beautiful gift of literacy. The illustrations, the plot twist and sweet messages conveyed in this book make it a wonderful story worth sharing with children of all ages.

Rachel Collins says

Genre: Contemporary Realistic

Grade Level: 1-2

This is a good story that will open up the eyes of some students. Hopefully by reading this they will realize that not everyone is lucky enough to be taught to read at such a young age. Reading this gave me a new appreciation for my education. It would be a great conversation starter and deals with uncommon themes. Overall a great read.

Courtney says

If you want to be surprised at the end of a story then The Wednesday Surprise by Eve Bunting is for you! Anna a young girl waits for her grandmother to come over every Wednesday so they can work on a big surprise for her father. In the story you'll discover that Anna has a brother named Sam but he is not involved in the surprise at all. During the story the pictures capture the moments Anna and her grandmother are sharing but what you don't realize is the real meaning behind them until you get to the end of the story. This book captures the sweet little moments of life and puts them into pictures that express such a great detail and love.

At the beginning of the story the grandma is waiting on a park bench to go to see her grandkids. On the following page is Anna waiting by the window. On the window Anna draws a birthday cake with her finger symbolizing she is excited to work on her fathers birthday gift. The colors and details of their faces show how much this family loves each other and how comfortable the setting is.

During the story Anna's brother Sam will appear for a short time. They constantly bring up the fathers birthday but the grandma acts like she forgets about it purposely because they don't want Sam to find out what they are up to.

One of my favorite parts of the book is when the grandma and Anna are on the couch reading together. Anna looks very interested in what the grandmother is saying. One of the quotes I loved from here was "Only seven years old and smart as paint already!" Then Anna says "They're all going to be so surprised on Saturday" while reading this part I thought the young girl Anna learned how to read a big chapter book and wanted to share it with them but it turns out differently at the end of the story....

Following on the other pages the father comes home and the family is portrayed to be very excited and you can tell while reading because in the pictures they all have smiles. Then its time for the father's birthday! They get everything ready and invite grandma over. The best part of the book is when they all gather in the family room to open presents. The father is not expecting many gifts so when Anna announces her and her grandmother have one more gift the father can't possibly guess what it is.

I won't give the ending away but I'm going to say its one of my favorite endings in a children's book by far. I think it captures real life situations and shows how families come together to better one another and show support. This is a great book for a child, teen, and adult.

Mallory says

This book is one of my favorites! It is obvious that someone in the story is learning how to read, (for a birthday surprise) but the reader is a surprise. I think that book shows the generation and culture gaps that existed (and still do today). I feel that literacy is often taken for granted today, and this book could be a useful resource to show students what a gift reading can be!

Rachael Fluke says

This book had a touching thoughtful surprise at the end. All the times the young girl thought she was learning to read, she was actually helping her grandmother to read. I would recommend this book for 2-4th grade kiddos. It is a good lesson about how often times, much more happiness can come out of a situation than you'd expect.

Rochelle Sondae says

This little gem of a book is one of my favorites. Because we are primarily a toy store our picture books are arranged by title. I know this sacrilege to many a book lover out there but it just can't be helped. It's kept way down on the bottom shelf where hardly anyone ventures. Needless to say this book rarely gets looked at. And it occasionally gets "eaten" by one of its neighbors. (We've missed a few times during inventory due to this only to find it when someone tries to buy Wemberly Worried or William's Doll) If a customer were to happen to find it, and read it, I'm sure they would love it as much as I do. It's the story of a Grandmother and her Granddaughter who share books on Wednesdays. I won't give away the surprise. You'll have to discover that for yourself.

Julia Reyes says

Wednesday Surprise is a heart-felt story that shows the positive experiences you can have with books. Anna and her grandmother get to spend time with just the two of them every Wednesday while the rest of Anna's family is busy. Anna and her grandmother have a great idea for Anna's father's birthday which is coming up soon. Every Wednesday, they practice and practice, making sure her father's present is perfect. On his birthday, he is showered with many gifts, and they save Anna and her grandmother's for last. What they didn't expect was Anna's grandmother reading a whole story book. After so many years of not knowing how to read, she decided it was time and asked her granddaughter to help her. This surprise was the best one Anna's dad received.

This story helps exhibit the importance of reading. Reading has the ability to form deep connections with people and it is never too late to start. For example, Anna will probably never forget teaching her grandmother to read, thus creating a positive memory towards reading for her. As for her grandmother, she created a experience with her grandchild that she will cherish forever. It is very important to create experiences that leaves a positive memory of reading to show its importance.

Melanie says

Anna and her grandmother have a Wednesday secret. Wednesdays are when Mom stays late at work, her brother goes to basketball practice and Dad is driving his big truck and won't be home til Saturday for his birthday party. That's part of the surprise; Anna and Grandma are planning the surprise for his birthday. Grandma comes to take care of Anna on Wednesdays when everyone else is away. She always brings a big bag with her. When everyone is gone Anna and Grandma sit on the couch and reach into the bag and pull out...books! They read together for a long time each Wednesday evening. By Saturday, they are ready to surprise everyone. Finally the day is here and after all of the gifts have been opened and the cake eaten,

Grandma stands up to present the last present. Anna hands her a book and Grandma reads the book to everyone present. You see, Grandma couldn't read until Anna taught her how.

A fabulous story for multi-generational families.

Felicia says

The Wednesday Surprise is about a young girl named Anna who spends time with her grandmother every Wednesday night planning a surprise for her dad's birthday. Anna and her grandmother are keeping their surprise from the entire family and plan to unveil it at the dad's birthday party. Little does the family know that the surprise was that Anna taught her grandmother how to read!

It's clear from the first picture of the story with Anna peering out the window that Anna is very close to her grandmother. For weeks, when the rest of the family was out of the house, the two of them would get together and practice reading. They kept their mission secret from everyone else, which implies a very close bond between the two of them.

This book explores the issue of adult literacy and literacy development. The grandmother advises the grandson at the end of the book, "It's much smarter if you learn to read when you're young. . . The chance may pass along with the years." Not only was grandmother's surprise a gift for her son, it was also a gift to herself.

I think this is a great book to teach the importance of literacy learning. More specifically, the challenges an adult faces when learning to read versus what a child endures when learning to read. It could be used to focus discussions around the importance of learning to read while in school, as well as the effects of positive relationships.

Jazmin Palma says

An activity I would implement after reading this book, would be to invite the grandparents to the classroom and have them read books to the class or the children read to them. This would be great for getting families involved in the class.

Jenni Golisch says

This book is a heart-warming story about a girl and her grandmother preparing to surprise their family members. The soft-toned illustrations are realistic, yet they have an impressionist touch. The story is told from the perspective of Anna, the main character and narrator at seven years old. The language is simple and sounds like a real seven year-old is telling the story.

What I like about this story, and many other Eve Bunting stories, is that she makes the reader infer and pay attention to details to figure out what's going on in the plot. For example, Anna tells the reader that her dad only comes home on Saturdays, he brought home stuff from a truck stop for his children, and he's tired from driving his big truck all night. With these clues, it's easy for the reader to figure out that he's a truck driver. I appreciate that Eve Bunting allows her readers to figure this out on their own without having to say that

Anna's dad is a truck driver. There are also other things you can infer using the context given in the story, like the family does not have very much money. I have never read an Eve Bunting story that I did not like and I can add *The Wednesday Surprise* to the list of books of hers that I enjoy and would read again.

Sarah Ravel says

The Wednesday Surprise by Eve Bunting is a touching story about the gift of reading. A young girl secretly teaches her grandmother to read as a birthday present for the girl's father. Over the course of the story, the reader knows the two are planning their secret and that it involves bags of books. However, it isn't revealed until the end that the grandmother is the one learning to read. This picture book gently raises the issue of adult illiteracy, a concept that may not be familiar to some young audiences. Children are typically raised to see adults as the experts and it may baffle some to realize that not all adults can read. The book also positions the young narrator in a position of power. Being literate, she has the power to teach and spread knowledge to her grandmother, an unusual role reversal. By the end of the book, the grandmother now feels empowered and excited having learned to read even stating that now she just might read everything in the world. The beautiful thing about this book is that the illiterate character is never looked down upon or viewed as less throughout the book. Altogether it is an enjoyable read.

Hannah says

Anna is a seven-year-old girl who is easily excited. Her impatience to run down the stairs and wait by the door before her Grandma has time to walk up the front steps illustrates her contagious energy and excitement for the surprise she and Grandma are planning. The breathe pictures that she shows to Grandma symbolize their special bond because Grandma is the only one who knows what Anna has drawn. Grandma is as dedicated to the surprise as Anna. Whenever the subject of her son's birthday comes up, she acts as if she has forgotten all about it.

Children and adults of all ages feel an immediate connection with Anna and Grandma as they prepare a surprise for Anna's dad's birthday. They meet together on Wednesday when no one but her brother Sam is around, and they read picture books that Grandma has brought in her big, cloth bag. Grandma plays that absentminded, old lady when reminded of her son's birthday as is she and Anna "hadn't been working on [their] special surprise for weeks and weeks." When Dad's birthday finally comes around, everything goes as planned and everyone present is in for the surprise of a life-time. I would rate this picture book a five star rating.

I loved how the reader was drawn into the story as they became a part of the surprise birthday gift. I actually felt like I was in the story. I felt excitement when I read that Grandma was coming. I felt a sense of importance as they got "down to business." I felt butterflies in my stomach when Anna and Grandma were so nervous they felt sick. The artwork was realistic as if to add merit to the lifelike story. There was even a lesson at the end: you are never too old to learn.

(NS) Dana says

This is a beautiful and inspiring story about a 7 year old girl named Anna and her successful efforts to make her grandmother read. On Wednesdays, Grandma and Anna spend time together where they share in a wonderful surprise. They work together to share with one another the wonderful lessons of life. Grandma

teaches Anna how to knit, and Anna teaches her European Immigrant grandmother how to read English. This is the surprise that Grandma gives to her son for his birthday.

This book definitely brought tears to my eyes! What a lovely story connecting generations to one another. I loved the bond I felt between the grandmother and Anna, and how much they both appreciated the gifts they had to offer. This book is a wonderful way to show students how literacy should not be taken for granted and how crucial it is to know how to read. I also loved this story because it showed that it is never too late to learn something new. This teaches everyone a beautiful lesson of life, and I look forward to sharing this wonderful story for generations.
