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My Name Is Seepeetza



Synopsis

Her name was Seepeetza when she was at home with her family. But now that she's living at the Indian residential school her name is Martha Stone, and everything else about her life has changed as well. Told in the honest voice of a sixth grader, this is the story of a young Native girl forced to live in a world governed by strict nuns, arbitrary rules, and a policy against talking in her own dialect, even with her family. Seepeetza finds bright spots, but most of all she looks forward to summers and holidays at home.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 720L (What's this?)

Paperback: 126 pages

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Average Customer Review: 3.5 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #213,298 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #21 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Canada #1093 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories #5533 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life

Age Range: 10 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 - 7

Customer Reviews

Written in what PW called a "devastatingly simple" style, this "rather desolate" autobiographical novel chronicles a girl's harsh experiences at an Indian residential school in 1950s British Columbia. Ages 10-12. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Gr. 5⁺-10. Her name is Seepeetza, but at the Indian residential school in British Columbia, she is called Martha. She hates her white name, but she is beaten if she talks "Indian." Her long hair is cut off. At the same time, the other students pick on her because she has green eyes and looks white. When she wets her bed, the nuns make her wear the wet sheet over her head. She gets in trouble

for daydreaming about the family ranch on the reservation that she was forced to leave to come to school. First published in 1992 in Canada, where it won the Sheila A. Egoff Children's Book Prize, this autobiographical novel is written in the form of Seepeetza's diary in her sixth-grade year in the 1950s. The drawback of the journal format is that the vignettes are sometimes static, repetitive, and disjointed. The great advantage is the immediacy of the child's voice and viewpoint. We feel her bewilderment and fear, her helplessness, and, above all, her longing for home. Few books dramatize this experience for young readers. Without preaching or rhetoric, the cruelty is laid bare. Hazel Rochman --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Never have I read a book that was more moving. I highly recommend this book as a relatively authentic means of educating ourselves and our youth about the realities of Native American disenfranchisement. It is beautifully written, with well developed characters.

Authentic, but not exciting.

Great condition. I received the book in a timely manner. I am pleased with the quality of the project. I recommend the seller.

There isn't much of a plot here, but the writing is skillfully done. The story is told in the form of twelve-year-old Seepeetza's diary, which she keeps over the course of one year while attending an Indian boarding school in British Columbia in the 1950s. At the time, the law mandated that all Native American children should be sent to their schools, where they were given Anglo names (hers was Martha) and punished if they spoke their native languages. Seepeetza's school, run by nuns, was a bleak institution where the children's physical needs were taken care of and they got a decent education, but they were bullied and generally treated harshly by the nuns. But she did get to go home on vacations. It's hard to write a novel in diary format and keep it realistic. Most writers go overboard and put way too much details in the diary, which moves the story along and lets the reader know what's going on, but you know nobody would write like that in their diary in real life. But Shirley Sterling struck the right balance here: Seepeetza's diary was detailed enough to be interesting, but short enough to pass for a real diary. It sounds like it really could have been written by a twelve-year-old girl.

It just was not written well. The diary entries dragged on, there was no plot or character

development, and the ending was just like the beginning.

This book was very interesting. It showed how Martha Stone kept memories of the ranch she lived on while away at school. These memories took her through the horrible school year where friends were seldom.

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