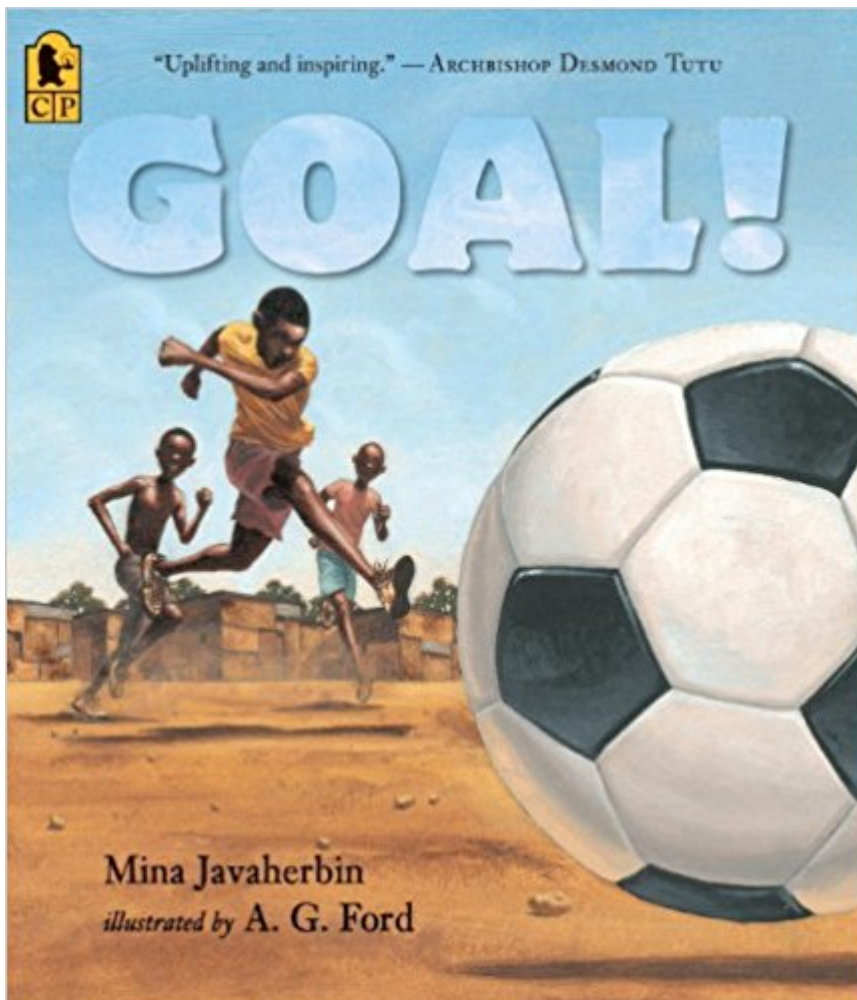




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Goal!



Synopsis

A lyrical, strikingly illustrated story celebrates the unifying power of soccer. In a dusty township in South Africa, Ajani and his friends have earned a brand-new, federation-size soccer ball. They kick. They dribble. They run. They score. These clever boys are football champions! But when a crew of bullies tries to steal their ball, will Ajani and his friends be able to beat them at their own game?

Book Information

Lexile Measure: AD350L (What's this?)

Paperback: 40 pages

Publisher: Candlewick; Reprint edition (April 10, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0763658227

ISBN-13: 978-0763658229

Product Dimensions: 9.4 x 0.2 x 10.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 16 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #419,627 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #204 in [Books > Children's Books](#)
[> Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Africa](#) #468 in [Books > Children's Books >](#)
[Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Bullies](#)

Age Range: 6 - 9 years

Grade Level: 1 - 4

Customer Reviews

Arriving in time for the 2010 World Cup, this heart-tugging picture book from a debut author tells a lyrical soccer story in the voice of a young boy in a South African shantytown. After winning a federation-size "football" at school, the narrator and his friends enjoy a game, but bullies interrupt them. With some deft foot maneuvers, though, the young players deter the aggressors and resume their game, this time with a wary lookout: "The streets are not always safe." The poetic text's rhythmic repetition emphasizes the boys' joyful empowerment: "When we play, / we forget to worry. / When we run, / we are not afraid." In full-page oil paintings, Ford uses unusual angles to intensify the sense of the scuffling, exciting action; the tense confrontation; and the reality of shantytown life. An afterword includes fascinating historical notes and reinforces the narrator's moving message about soccer's power to inspire and connect fans and players around the world: "I follow the ball to the end of the alley; / I follow the ball to the end of the world." Grades

K-3. --Gillian Engberg --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Mina Javaherbin was born in Iran and immigrated to the United States, where she is now a practicing architect. She lives in Southern California. This is her first picture book. A. G. Ford is the illustrator of the New York Times bestseller *BARACK* by Jonah Winter and *MICHELLE* by Deborah Hopkinson. He also contributed to *OUR CHILDREN CAN SOAR: A CELEBRATION OF ROSA, BARACK, AND THE PIONEERS OF CHANGE* by Michelle Cook. He lives in The Colony, Texas.

This beautiful book comes out just in time for the 2010 World Cup, but it will be treasured long after the games are over. The lyrical story is set in South Africa, amidst the kind of poverty that many American kids can hardly imagine. But the emotions of the book's young heroes are powerful, poignant, and universal - a reminder of our common humanity and the unifying power of sport. The courage and pluck these boys show in the face of the bullies they encounter will make you want to stand up and cheer. Bullying is a hot topic these days, and *GOAL!* will surely be a conversation-starter for both teachers and parents. When I read the book to my 5 1/2 year old, it sparked a great discussion about bullies and bullying, and about how different life can be in other parts of the world. But my son was quick to notice that these South African boys play and love soccer, just like he does. When I got to the end of the book, my son, who usually prefers nonfiction, said, "Read it again!" Javaherbin's poetic text and Ford's emotive oil paintings work beautifully together to create a story that is, in the words of Archbishop Desmond Tutu's testimonial, "uplifting and inspiring." This is a story that stays with you. I would recommend it for anyone - child, adult, coach, fan - age 6 and up.

A very gentle way to teach children about the greater world out there. Wonderful book. My 8&10 year olds love this book. So does my friend's 4-yo nephew.

Beautiful book. Inspiring story. I first saw this book at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. I donated it to my granddaughter's school library.

I have a 3 yr old "book-worm." Eventhough he can't read yet, he expects 3 books to be read to him every night. I bought this book because 1)It's a typical boy storybook 2)it's different: ethically/geographically/socially. My son's very sharp, so he really felt for the boys in the story & he got angry @ the bullies; needless to say we had a little "how to defend yourself" lesson in the book.

I like it. Archbishop Tutu, did a marvelous job!

With a romantic tone, the author tells a rather tough story drawn from what is probably happening right now somewhere in the world; and with the same romanticism, it tells of football succeeds to bring smiles and good times.

This book was great. My son's name is in it so we all love it. Outside of that, we love the book because we love books about people from different cultures.

Awesome book. Teachers a must for your classroom.

I just read this book to my 8 year old son and 5 year old daughter. We were all intrigued by it. The story is simple but touching. The illustrations were amazing and realistic. This is a story I can read over and over again.

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