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Steal Away Home (Aladdin Historical Fiction)



Synopsis

When twelve-year-old Dana Shannon starts to strip away wallpaper in her family's old house, she's unprepared for the surprise that awaits her. A hidden room -- containing a human skeleton! How did such a thing get there? And why was the tiny room sealed up? With the help of a diary found in the room, Dana learns her house was once a station on the Underground Railroad. The young woman whose remains Dana discovered was Lizbet Charles, a conductor and former slave. As the scene shifts between Dana's world and 1856, the story of the families that lived in the house unfolds. But as pieces of the puzzle begin to fall into place, one haunting question remains -- why did Lizbet Charles die?

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 0890 (What's this?)

Series: Aladdin Historical Fiction

Paperback: 192 pages

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

When Lois discovers a diary and a human skeleton in a hidden room, she learns that her house was a station on the Underground Railroad; scenes alternate between 1856 and the present. Ages 8-12. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Grade 6-8? Dana, 12, is helping her parents to restore an old house in Kansas as a bed-and-breakfast when she discovers a boarded-up room containing a human skeleton. With it, she finds the diary of Millicent Weaver, a Quaker and early resident of the house. She learns that the house was a stop on the Underground Railroad, and that runaway slaves were taken there by a former slave, Lizbet Charles. Of course, Miz Lizbet is Dana's skeleton, and the cause of her death at the age of 25 is finally revealed at the end of the novel. The story is told in alternating chapters, shifting between the present and 1856, when the events involving the long-dead young woman took place. The best developed character is young James Weaver, who struggles with his family's philosophy of nonviolence and with the secrets he must keep. The historical sections flow together well, revealing aspects of Miz Lizbet's life, which in some ways resembles Harriet Tubman's. The Weavers use traditional Quaker speech, liberally sprinkled with thee and thou. The modern-day scenes are somewhat less successful, and some of the conversations among the young people are a bit contrived. Still, the book will make a nice addition to historical fiction collections about pre-Civil War events. ?Bruce Anne Shook, Mendenhall Middle School, Greensboro, NC Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

There are so many things that can be done with this text. I used this text for enrichment in a 5th grade classroom. I was able to utilize literary elements, compare and contrast the characters as well as the two different eras that occur every other chapter. Figurative language, similes, and metaphors are abundant throughout the text. All of which aligns to the core! The students were fascinated by the content that they read and exposed them to the diversity and attitudes of like during the mid 1800s. Several students are excited to read the sequel, which is only available digitally at the time of this review.

The author does an excellent job weaving historical events into a suspenseful mystery that will keep kids' attention. Highly recommended

This book is an excellent example of good young adult literature. The story is captivating and still gives students a factual background. A personal look at the underground railroad through the eyes of two young people....one a young Quaker boy and his family and a contemporary young woman and her friends. We used this book in an interdisciplinary unit on the Civil War and the students really enjoyed it. We were also lucky enough to get Lois Ruby to come and visit with our students. She is a charming and engaging speaker who truly loves young adult literature.

It was interesting, but hard to follow.

Not my favorite, but a decent read on civil war times and slavery in the United States. I read it with my 5th grade class. They seemed to like it.

Daughter loved this book.

Good book report reading.

Lois Ruby will steal your heart with this precious book, *Steal Away Home*. This is a gold medal winner of a book. Ruby skillfully crafts this story in such a way as to make you feel that you are a part of two worlds at the same time. You are back in the 1800s and yet you are also in the here and now. You start to feel the emotions of each character and the anxieties and fears, along with the pain and pride. This book ranks right along with classics like *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Dover Thrift Editions) and *The Red Badge of Courage* as far as telling the story of the Underground Railroad, slavery and the racial divide of the Civil War. The vivid language and the imagery are a teacher's delight. This book can be used to teach across the curriculum for an integrated study of writing, reading/language arts and of course social studies, or it can just be plain entertaining.

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