



## Clarion Review

Picture Books

### **Diary of a Crayon: Green Gets Bullied**

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Two Stars (out of Five)

*Diary of A Crayon* is the diary of Green Crayon, as he tells the story of his owner, Emma, and the obstacles she faces in her coloring endeavors when her fellow students ridicule her for not coloring within the lines. Her emotions are mirrored in Green, who is teased by his brother, Blue, who makes fun of Green for wearing glasses and not having anything important to color green.

The concept of a crayon going through the same experiences and emotions as his owner is somewhat original. However, the sentences ramble, and each diary entry reads as unorganized, long-winded and disjointed. The book opens with the first diary entry: “Dear Diary, Today is Emma’s first day of school. Emma is Sally’s sister. She is a shy, sweet girl. Emma is so excited about school.” Sally is not mentioned until about eight entries later, and the entry again introduces her as the sister.

Although the book is subtitled *Green Gets Bullied*, the concept of bullying is a little jumbled with some other social issues. The story does touch on various issues of self-esteem, teasing and peer acceptance, but the characters’ emotions and actions are usually summarized and described by the narrator rather than allowing the reader to interpret the emotions through the characters’ actions, expressions and thoughts: “I am pleased,” “We are both nervous,” “I want her to be proud of me.” These repetitive and general narrated statements make it hard to identify with any of the characters or make them unique and memorable.

The diary entries are on green pages with a lighter green, almost yellowish trim, and the illustrations are cartoon-like. Whilst they do effectively capture Emma's expression effectively, the bright colors and large, close-cropped illustrations lack subtlety and are somewhat overwhelming by the end of the book.

*Diary of A Crayon* is a great idea that needs some detailed coloring inside the lines to make the characters richer, the story line more concise and coherent and the message clearer for the audience.

*Maya Fleischmann*