



I See the World

Jean Barlow

I See the World (Sep 1, 2012)

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Children aren't always aware that not everyone around them is just like them. In *I See The World*, Jean Barlow offers a children's book based on a poem by Karen Benedetto. It's all about sight and it works on several different levels. For sighted kids, it explains that there are children around them who may look similar, but see the world very differently because, for example, they may need to wear a patch over one eye, or require glasses, or are completely blind. For children who are sight impaired, the book is translated into braille as well. Feeling the bumpy lines of this language is an education in its own right for sighted kids, for whom Barlow includes a quick guide at the back of the book on how to use the braille alphabet.

She describes this volume as a "twin-vision" children's book and intends that it may serve as a way of teaching tolerance and building confidence and acceptance.

The voice of this rhyming story is told by a variety of children: bespectacled Glen, blind Brenda, and Paul, who wears a patch. The rhyme scheme works well and the story is easy to follow, accompanied by bright, colorful pictures. Brenda's voice, for example, says of her blindness, "It's hard for some to understand (how) I see the world with my two hands. It's like a movie in my mind. I see it even though I'm blind." Paul sees the world through just one eye, explaining that the practice "will make my weak eye strong." He continues, "I wear it proudly all day long, my pirate patch for all to see, and underneath, it's really me!"

Barlow includes a CD containing the words of the story set to music by Benedetto, and includes the sheet music for the song on the back inside cover of the book.

This book is an important teaching tool for the sighted about how sight impaired-children see the world, but it's also a delightful piece of literature in its own right for blind or sight-impaired children. As such, it's a great addition to the children's section of a library, a classroom, or the personal bookshelves of children aged three to nine. Visit iseetheworld-childrensbook.com.

LAUREN KRAMER (October 24, 2012)

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