

Rae's First Day: The First Story in the Capables Series

Danny Jordan

Agustina Perciante, Illustrator

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*In the adorable and conscientious picture book *Rae's First Day*, a girl with a limb difference has an empowering introduction to kindergarten.*

In Danny Jordan's picture book *Rae's First Day*, a child makes use of her differences to save the day.

Rae was born with a limb difference: she has just one bone in her right forearm and two fingers on her right hand. Her difference gives her a superpower that she has told no one about.

On her first day of kindergarten, Rae is both nervous and excited. The day is rainy, but when the teacher says they're going to have indoor recess, outdoorsy Rae uses her superpower to change the weather from gloomy to sunny. After speaking to another student, she begins to think she may not be the only kid with superpowers, either.

This cinematic story is structured like a comic book; it mirrors superhero tales. Expository moments are kept apart in square blocks, while people's speech bubbles make use of a jubilant font. Further, the layout varies between pages, with important moments highlighted in full-page panels.

The illustrations are dynamic: their diverse characters have big eyes and striking, radiant expressions. When a boy in Rae's class approaches her to ask about her arm, the close-up of his face, with his furrowed brows and a glint in his eyes, conveys that Rae feels intimidated and anxious about what he may say next. And the angles of people's bodies impart energy, too. Further, the book's bright colors and bold shapes are appealing.

To generate suspense, the introduction to Rae's story is slow, with the first several pages emphasizing her mixed feelings as she sits at the breakfast table and rides in the car on the way to school. Because of this, when her superpower is finally revealed, it is explosive, identifiable, and poignant.

In the adorable and conscientious picture book *Rae's First Day*, a girl with a limb difference has an empowering introduction to kindergarten.

AIMEE JODOIN (December 16, 2021)

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