



The Children's Rebellion and Climate Change

Carol Sutters

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The instructive picture book The Children's Rebellion and Climate Change is a child-friendly introduction to a looming global issue.

A mother and her children discuss the problems caused by climate change, and the need to take drastic and immediate action, in Carol Sutters's didactic picture book *The Children's Rebellion and Climate Change*.

Tom and Kate, watching a news conference on television, see a girl, Greta, challenge politicians to take bold steps to slow the effects of global warming. This prompts them into a lengthy conversation with their mother, in which the children share what they've learned in school, and through which their mother responds with additional information and feedback.

The family's conversation lists many problems associated with climate change, including of increased flooding, fires, and the depletion of coral reefs. On the hopeful side, Tom and Kate's mother also mentions that scientists in Australia are attempting to cross-breed hardier corals, though they are doing so in a "desperate hurry." In such moments, unintended pessimism seeps in.

Though the illustrations include word balloons, some of them contain images, instead of text: when Kate speaks about the breaking up of ice sheets, an image of a polar bear who's staring out onto a melting landscape is included in her bubble. Though some such images do complement the mentioned concepts, this instance is misleading: Kate's polar bear comes alongside a mention of the Antarctic, though polar bears only live in the Arctic. And early in the book, two pages of dialogue are attributed to Greta and a reporter, though the corresponding illustrations show Tom and Kate listening as their mother speaks.

The text itself, which is devoted to the children's conversation with their mother, is often stilted and unrealistically verbose. Further undermining the book's work are instances of inconsistent capitalization, the mention of a second parent who's never pictured or involved in the story, and the uses of under contextualized terms, including with the Children's Rebellion itself, which is not introduced until late in the book.

Seeking to impart an understanding of the dangers of climate change and the need to act, the instructive picture book *The Children's Rebellion and Climate Change* is a child-friendly introduction to a looming global issue.

PETER DABBENE (February 17, 2022)

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