The Portrayal of Epilepsy in Meena Meets Her Match

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Abstract
Epilepsy is a spectrum disorder characterized by random and unprovoked seizures that affects approximately 470,000 children living in the U.S. (Epilepsy Foundation, n.d.). Despite this prevalence, few contemporary, middle-grade books reflect the experiences of children with epilepsy. Books that appropriately reflect diverse experiences are validating and important in a multicultural world (Bishop, 1990). Not only should books represent students with multiple diverse experiences (such as living with epilepsy), but also they must do so in an empathetic, inclusive, and informative way. This Book Analysis Project critically considers how epilepsy is portrayed in *Meena Meets Her Match* (Manternach, 2019), a contemporary, middle-grade book in which the protagonist, a third-grade girl, is diagnosed with epilepsy. In the analysis, the portrayal of epilepsy in Manternach's book is discussed in accordance with epilepsy research, testimonies, and other evidence-based sources. In addition, two plans for lessons intended to teach middle-grade audiences about living with epilepsy are presented.

Recommended Citation

Meena Meets Her Match. 1. I circle my arm around my President Portrait so nobody can see it.  #83 in Epilepsy. #290 in Children's Valentine's Day Books (Books). #746 in Children's Books on Disability. MEENA MEETS HER MATCH is wonderfully executed as a book that guides a child through the experience of a potentially scary medical condition. All the family reactions, from Meena's to her sister's to her parents', feel spot-on and realistic. Manternach is honest and keen-eyed when drawing characters, which elevates this story. Meena Meets Her Match book. Graduates of the Ramona Quimby series will adore Meena Zee as she navigates the triumphs and challenges of family, friendship, and personal secrets in this charming middle grade debut. Meena's life is full of color. She wears vibrant clothes, eats every shade of the rainbow, and plucks eye-catching trash from the neighborhood recycling bins. But when Meena's best friend, Sofia, stops playing with her at recess and she experiences an unexpected and scary incident at breakfast, nothing can fight off the gray. With the help of her cousin, Eli, and her stuffed zebra, Raymond, Meena discovers that the best way to break through the blah is to let her true colors shine. What Kind of Book is Meena Meets Her Match. Themes: friendship. Meena's life is full of color. She wears vibrant clothes, eats every shade of the rainbow, and plucks eye-catching trash from the neighborhood recycling bins. But when Meena's best friend, Sofia, stops playing with her at recess and she experiences an unexpected and scary incident at breakfast, nothing can fight off the gray. That's when Meena comes up with a plan to create the BEST and most COLORFUL Valentine's Day Box in the class. With the help of her cousin, Eli, and her stuffed zebra, Raymond, Meena discovers that the best way to break through the blah is to let her true colors shine. NOTE: This title is a Bargain book.