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REVIEW: Late for School

Tracy Walker

Dawson County Public Library

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her research is also helpful. Recommended for public libraries and elementary school media centers. ►►

— Reviewed by **Sarah McGhee**
Chestatee Regional Library System

CHILDREN'S FICTION

Late for School by Mike Reiss,
Illustrated by Michael Austin
(Peachtree Publishers, 2003; ISBN:
1-56145-286-6, \$16.95)



In his picture book *Late for School*, author Mike Reiss takes us on one boy's fantastical morning journey to class. Taking place in Manhattan, the well-known landmarks in the city that the protagonist passes and interacts with are some of the most charming elements of this book. The obstacles he encounters at each are equally delightful. Smitty tells us he has never been late for school, but that's before he meets up with whales in Times Square, King Kong at the Empire State Building, a T. rex and humongous birds. Illustrator Michael Austin is clever in his ability to perfectly blend the visual elements of the city with Reiss' text. A great example of this can be seen in how the swooping, humongous birds Smitty runs into take the form of the metal variety that adorn the Chrysler Building. This picture book demonstrates the power of the imagination in making the everyday world that surrounds us come to life. The intricate and playful illustrations serve as a perfect partner for the equally humorous rhyming text. At the end of his walk to school, we realize why Smitty's trip is so eventful, and it makes the reader long for equally adventurous journeys as well. This would be a welcome addition for most children's collections. ►►

— Reviewed by **Tracy Walker**
Dawson County Public Library

Spotlight on Teen Reading

In 2004, a group of high school media specialists saw a need to promote teen literature throughout the state. The group came together, brainstormed, and the Georgia Peach Award for Teen Readers was born. The purposes of these awards are to highlight and promote the best current young adult literature for Georgia high-school-age students, to encourage young adults to read, and to promote the development of cooperative school and public library services for young adults. Teens vote for their favorite books out of the year's top 20 nominees at their high schools and local public libraries. The deadline

for teens to cast their vote this year is Friday, March 13.

This year's nominees are:

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie (Little, Brown, 2007; ISBN: 978-03160-1368-0, \$16.99)

Budding cartoonist Junior leaves his troubled school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend an all-white farm town school where the only other Native American is the school mascot.

Absolutely Positively Not by David LaRochelle (Arthur A. Levine Books, 2005; ISBN: 978-04395-9109-6, \$16.95)
Chronicles a teenage boy's humorous attempts to fit in at his Minnesota high school by becoming a macho, girl-loving, Playboy-pinup-displaying heterosexual.

American Born Chinese by Gene Yang (First Second, 2006; ISBN: 978-15964-3152-2, \$17.95)

This wonderfully illustrated graphic novel alternates three interrelated stories about the problems of young Chinese-Americans trying to participate in the popular culture.

Boot Camp by Todd Strasser (Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2007; ISBN: 978-14169-0848-7, \$16.00)
After ignoring several warnings to stop dating his teacher, Garrett is sent to a boot camp that uses unorthodox and brutal methods to train students to obey their parents.

The Boyfriend List by E. Lockhart (Delacorte Books for Young Readers, 2005; ISBN: 978-03857-3206-2, \$15.95)
Ruby Oliver, a moderately popular 15-year-old who has suddenly become a social pariah, begins seeing a psychiatrist and makes a list of all her past boyfriends in an attempt to understand where her life went wrong.

Copper Sun by Sharon Draper (Atheneum, 2006; ISBN: 978-06898-2181-3, \$16.95)

Two 15-year-old girls — one a slave and the other an indentured servant — escape their Carolina plantation and try to make their way to Fort Moses, Fla., a Spanish colony that gives sanctuary to slaves.

Epic by Conor Kostick (Viking Juvenile, 2007; ISBN: 978-06700-6179-2, \$17.99)

On New Earth, a world based on a video role-playing game, 14-year-old Erik persuades his friends to aid him in some unusual gambits in order to save Erik's father from exile and safeguard the futures of each of their families.

Gingerbread by Rachel Cohn (Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, 2002; ISBN: 978-06898-4337-2, \$15.95)
After being expelled from a fancy boarding school, Cyd