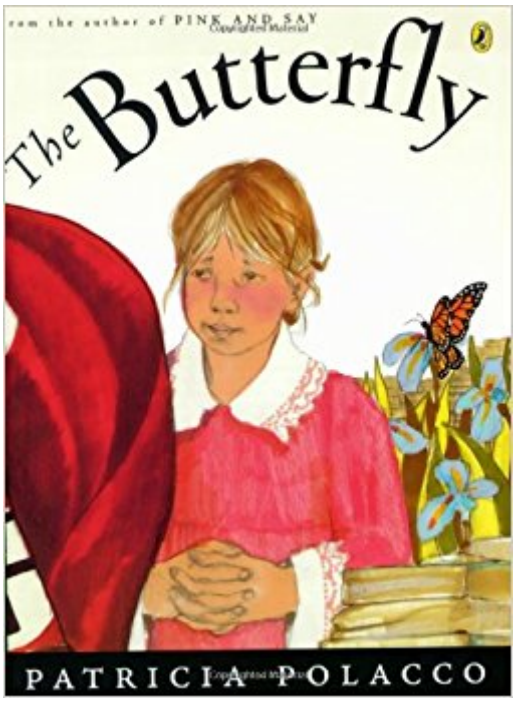
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The Butterfly



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Synopsis

Ever since the Nazis marched into Monique?s small French village, terrorizing it, nothing surprises her, until the night Monique encounters ?the little ghost? sitting at the end of her bed. She turns out to be a girl named Sevrine, who has been hiding from the Nazis in Monique?s basement. Playing after dark, the two become friends, until, in a terrifying moment, they are discovered, sending both of their families into a nighttime flight.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 0630 (What's this?)

Paperback: 48 pages

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Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 48 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #59,567 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #16 inÃ Â Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Holocaust #16 inÃ Â Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Holocaust #30 inÃ Â Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Europe

Age Range: 6 - 9 years

Grade Level: 1 - 4

Customer Reviews

Lying in bed one moonlit night, Monique awakens to see what she thinks is a little ghost sitting at the foot of her bed, petting her cat. In the time that her French village has been occupied by Nazi troops, Monique has come to believe that nothing can surprise her anymore. But when she discovers that the little ghost is in fact a Jewish girl named Sevrine, who is living in a hidden room in Monique's own basement, she is very surprised indeed! The two become secret friends, whispering and giggling late at night after their families have gone to bed. An unfortunate and alarming moment of discovery by a neighbor forces the girls to reveal their friendship to Monique's mother, who has been harboring Sevrine's family and others throughout the Nazi occupation. Based on the true experiences of the author's great aunt, Marcel Solliliage, this poignant story is a good introduction to

the terrors of Nazism, racism, and World War II. The emphasis is on simple friendship and quiet heroism, with an occasional lapse into clichÃƒÂ©d metaphor (butterfly as symbol of freedom). Any child can relate to the bewilderment the two friends experience in the face of prejudice. Patricia Polacco has written and illustrated many other picture books, including Chicken Sunday and Pink and Say. (Ages 6 to 9) --Emilie Coulter --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Polacco continues to mine her family history, this time telling the story of an aunt's childhood in wartime France. Young Monique doesn't comprehend the brutality of the Nazis' missionAuntil the day three German soldiers find her admiring a butterfly. "Joli, n'est-ce pas?" says one to Monique, then grabs the butterfly and crushes it in his fist. The butterfly, or papillon as it is frequently called here, becomes for Monique a symbol of the Nazis' victims. Her sympathies are quickly focused: one night Monique wakes up to discover a girl in her bedroom and learns that she and her parents, Jews, have been hiding for months in Monique's house, protected by Monique's mother. The girl, Sevrine, has been forbidden to leave the hiding place, so she and Monique meet secretly. Then a neighbor sees the two girls at the window one night, and Sevrine's family must flee. As an afterword reveals, only Sevrine survives, contacting Monique by letterAwith a drawing of a butterfly. In comparison with the seeming spontaneity of the author's Pink and Say, this tale's use of the butterfly symbolism gives it a slightly constructed or manipulated feel. Even so, the imagery and the dramatic plot distill for young readers the terrors and tragic consequences of the Nazi regime and the courageousness of resisters. Ages 4-8. (May) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

The reviews state that THE BUTTERFLY has a target audience of ages 6-9 but I disagree! Polacco's lovely stories have appeal for all generations. Today is my daughter's birthday; she is a new 2nd grade teacher. My favorite gifts to her are six Patricia Polacco books. THE BUTTERFLY was written in honor of Polacco's great aunt, Marcelle Solliliage and her Aunt, Monique Gaw. Marcelle was part of the French underground and resistance during World War II. She bravely hid Jews in her home during the Nazi occupation. Monique was oblivious to these happenings until she met a young Jewish girl, Sevrine who happened to be hiding in the basement. A friendship developed that has endured many decades, right up to today! Polacco's exquisite story teaches the reader about true bravery, honor, and self-sacrifice (not to mention the history of a time not so long ago). How many of us would do today, as these valiant heroes have done many times in the past?

I am collecting this author's books. They are just that good-this one included.

Patricia Polacco is, by far, one of the very best author-illustrators I have read. The Butterfly is the perfect balance in portraying the horrors of hatred, yet not becoming overwhelming to our young readers.I use quality literature with my students to teach the basics of language and social issues. Whenever I read this book with my students, they are riveted from the very beginning. The discussions resulting from the story are always insightful, inspiring deep questions from the children and considerable thought.The illustrations, as always with Patricia Polacco, elevate the emotional impact of the events of the story.The fact that this story is of Patricia Polacco's aunt and great-aunt and a true story is meaningful to my students.

My 3rd graders had asked a lot about Hitler, Nazis, and the Holocaust after one student had brought up the subject. I tried to make it understandable to that age group. But when I was searching some of Patricia Polacco's books for another unit, I came across The Butterfly. I decided this was the perfect way for my students to access the subject, by seeing it through the eyes of these 2 girls. My class was so quiet and focused as I read it. We talked about it a lot when I finished. As usual, Mrs. Polacco handles a tough subject with sensitivity and art that conveys the deeper meaning, yet in a way elementary students can handle. I am an even bigger fan of her after reading this book.

The book is very touching and well written for elementary students. A little girl wakes during the night to see the shape of another girl in her room. She rubs her eyes, looks again, and the girl is gone. This a story of hiding and flight for Jews during WWII. As with most of Patricia Polacco's books, it is based on a factual incident that is document at the end of the book. I have added this book to my classroom library as I try and teach the Holocaust to students.

Perfect for follow up or introduction to the Holocaust in classrooms.

Wonderful story of a very difficult time in our history, shares hope and friendship that lasts a lifetime!

Beautiful art work accompanies this story of a family who hides a child from the Germans during WWII. The author appears in this book as she does in all of her books. Tearful story. Great read-aloud.

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