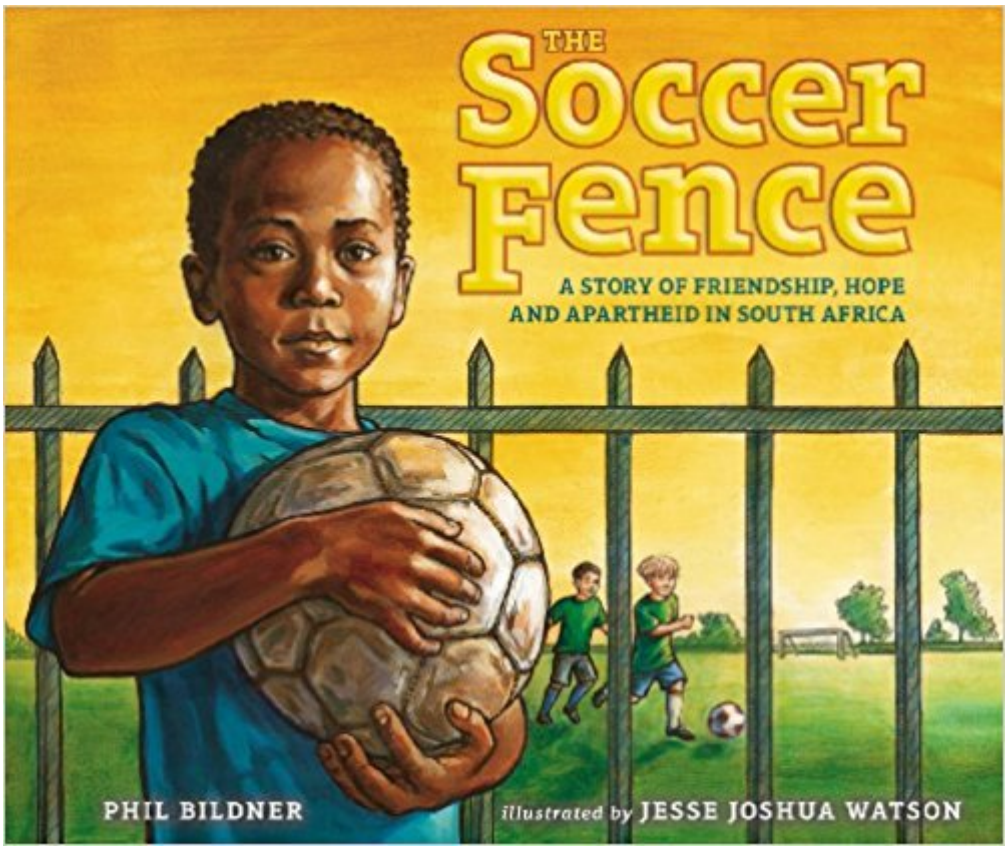
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The Soccer Fence: A Story Of Friendship, Hope, And Apartheid In South Africa



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Synopsis

In a country struggling with acceptance, hope can come in many different forms.Ã Â As a boy, Hector loved playing soccer in his small Johannesburg township. He dreamed of playing on a real pitch with the boys from another part of the city, but apartheid made that impossible. Then, in 1990, Nelson Mandela was released from prison, and apartheid began to crumble. The march toward freedom in South Africa was a slow one, but when the beloved Bafana Bafana national soccer team won the African Cup of Nations, Hector realized that dreams once impossible could now come true.Ã Â This poignant story of friendship artfully depicts a brief but critical moment in South AfricaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s history and the unique role that sports can play in bringing people together.

Book Information

Hardcover: 40 pages

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Best Sellers Rank: #52,524 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #6 inÃ Â Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Africa #39 inÃ Â Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Africa #82 inÃ Â Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Prejudice & Racism

Age Range: 6 - 8 years

Grade Level: 1 - 3

Customer Reviews

Gr 1Ã¢â ¬â œ3Ã¢â ¬â •Apartheid has ended in South Africa, but a young boy learns that change takes time in this story of friendship and of a nation healing. Hector plays soccer with his sister in the barren field in his township in Johannesburg. What he really wants is to play with the white boys on the lush green field he sees when his mother takes him to the other part of the city where she works, but they never acknowledge the black boy. Newspaper headlines give a history of South Africa from the announcement that apartheid is over to President Mandela being elected (with Hector's family allowed to vote) to South Africa's hosting the 1996 African Cup of Nations. Each

historic step is paralleled by the boys' soccer games in their individual neighborhoods as they root for their South African team, Bafana Bafana, throughout the tournament. When their team makes the finals, both boys attend the game and recognize each other from years of watching from the other side of the fence and raise fists in acknowledgement as they lead the procession of cheering fans in a symbolic uniting of a divided country. Bright acrylic paints and broad pencil strokes bring the characters to life while Bildner's first-person narrative personalizes Hector's childhood during these momentous events. Historical notes provide more detail in this effective introduction to apartheid and Nelson Mandela in a tender tribute to which young readers will be able to relate.Ã¢â ¬â •Kristine M. Casper, Huntington Public Library, NY

Hector tells of apartheidÃ¢â ¬â„¢s gradual breakdown, which happened while he was growing up in South Africa. As a young black boy, he watches white boys playing soccer, but they ignore his request to join their game. Years pass and changes come. After the first open election, Nelson Mandela becomes president. Later, South Africa hosts a soccer tournament and wins with an integrated team. And, at long last, a white boy invites Hector to play soccer with him. Bildner overcomes some of the problems inherent in a picture book with a time frame extending over several years. Roughly four years old in the opening scenes, Hector is in his early teens at the end, but the illustrations convincingly portray the boys as they grow up, while the narrative thread connecting the storyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s events is strong. Combining pencil drawings and acrylics, the illustrations are colorful and expressive. An appended apartheid timeline, aimed at a much older audience, briefly discusses significant events. This unusual picture bookshows social change as it affects one boy. Grades 1-3. --Carolyn Phelan

This book is absolutely gorgeous! As a South African living in the US, I really wanted to find a good selection of books relating to South Africa for my 6 year old daughter. This book does not disappoint! A++

good

Excellent story.

This could have been a great story. I loved the theme and illustrations. The content was too complex for a kid to enjoy.It made for a boring read for my 5 year old - and I I was so looking

forward t it being a good book with a good message.

Go back in time to South Africa when apartheid was the norm. Children of color did not have the same opportunities as their white counterparts. But when Nelson Mandela is freed in 1990 and in 1994 voted President of South Africa, things change slowly for the children on both sides of the fence with professional soccer teams playing a major part in the newly formed friendship one boy longs for.A peaceful book with a bright outlook at what can be when given a chance, that equality is just that, equal for all humans. The back matter gives an Apartheid Timeline which is insightful and intriguing.An #exceptional book, a #mustread. #PB #freedom #soccerWritten by Phil Bildner, illustrated by Jesse Joshua Watson and published by G. P. Putnam Sons.

I read this to my son tonight. He loves soccer and related to the kids. It was good way to teach about history. Uplifting!

This book is a story of prejudice and apartheid written for an audience of 8-12 year olds. Through the experiences of two young boys of different races who just want to play soccer together, Bildner illustrates the destructive nature of apartheid. Ultimately, The Soccer Fence is a story of friendship and of hope.

will purchase again. my best friend need it , delivery on time receive it next day , OK Awesome product! Works perfectly for leveling and trimming cakes!

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