

I enjoy are Girl Scouts, playing the alto sax and piano, Math Olympiad, climbing trees, playing video games, solving difficult puzzles, and playing board games or Connect Four with my older brother.

L E V E L O N E



Nate Entz, Age 9, Grade 4
Individual Entry
Three Rivers, CA

Dear Mr. Jacques,

I have read four of your books: *Redwall*, *Martin the Warrior*, *Mossflower* and *Salamandastron*. I am on my fifth, *Mattimeo*. I have really enjoyed your books. In this letter, I'd like to talk to you about *Mossflower*. The characters really affected me. They are loyal friends and have qualities that I admire. I also really love the world I get to go into when I open any of your books.

One of the things that I like about your books is that they make me really hungry. I love how you describe the food at the feasts. For example, when Abbess Germaine and the residents of Loamhedge come to Brockhall. The plum cake, the meadow cream, the maple syrup, it all sounds so delicious then my mouth begins to water. It feels like a dam is broken and a river just comes gushing into my mouth.

Your stories and characters make me laugh out loud. Gonff is so funny whenever he brags. I love it when he makes up songs about himself and how he's such a great mouse thief. I feel sorry for the other characters when he does that, but it's true. He is a really good mouse thief. It was so funny when he ended up dancing with the crab! I laughed very hard at that. The robin spy, Chibb, also made me laugh. I love how he's so fat because they reward him with candied chestnuts. I laugh at the way he clears his throat before he says anything.

Then there's Dinny. I couldn't imagine the difference between what an old mole and a young mole's voice would sound like because you don't write them any different. I would sit for a while, imagining, until I got their voices in my head, and then it sounded really entertaining. I love the way all the moles talk and laugh with the "hurr, hurr, hurr." I like how Dinny and Gonff are such good friends. They're two of the funnier characters in the book, I think.

Tsarmina is evil, but I like her as a bad guy. (Bad girl?) I like how she's one of the smarter and more organized villains. She's very proud and doesn't like to lose her dignity. Most books don't have a woman as a villain.

Boar the Fighter is really the only character who I think died in the way of the warrior, and the way he wanted to die. I think he's really one of the only characters that died in a good way.

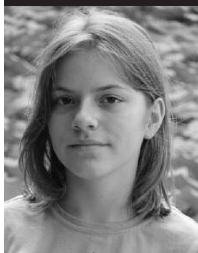
Martin is my favorite character of all. He is such a good friend. He's such a great warrior, yet he doesn't brag about the things he does. He does what he thinks is right. I like how he gives his enemy chances to run away from Mossflower, but if they don't, he will do everything in his power to destroy them. For instance, when Martin attacks Kotir near the end of the book. I like that he tries to make peace. I admire him for that.

Because important characters die in your books, it helped me cherish friends more than I normally would, because I realized that, eventually, they will die. At first, when a character dies, I think, "Dang it! Why did you kill that character? Why can't you have everything right?" But then I think it's because life isn't always perfect. And I don't know about other people, but I did learn a lesson from that; that life is not always the way you want it to be.

I've really enjoyed expressing myself to you, even though it's hard to put my thoughts into words. Thank you for writing your books. I'm sure you have many fans, but I think I'm one of your biggest!

Since kindergarten, I have been home-schooled through the Eleanor Roosevelt Community Learning Center, where I take classes. There are many things I enjoy doing. For example, I like being at home, and I also like to fish, and play freeze tag, read, act, and sing in choir, and one of my favorites is I like to play imaginary games with my sticks. So you might have already noticed that I am the kind of guy who likes to be home a lot!

L E V E L O N E



Isabella Hutchinson, Age 11, Grade 6
Echo Horizon School
Culver City, CA

Dear Betty Smith,

Your book, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, is one that integrates the destitution of poverty, death, unassertiveness, abusive parents and the every day desperation and thirst to be accepted and to have friends. The book inspired me to believe in myself as well as to accept others no matter who they are or what role they play in my life. While the book describes the hardships of a young girl, Francie, growing up in downtown Brooklyn, unaccepted because she is poor and her father is a drunkard unable to support the family, I felt those same kind of feelings, moving into a new school with no friends and feeling unaccepted.

I read your book in third grade, with my mother helping me to understand parts I didn't, as well as "the big words." For a whole two months, I lived and breathed the