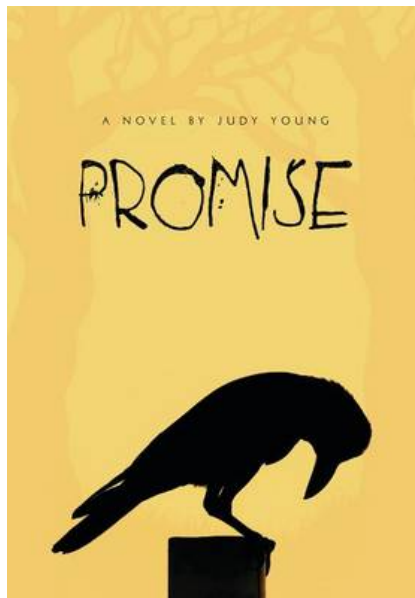


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Children and Young Adult Book Review *Middle School* Promise

Student Reviewer: Bailey Brockelbank
Educator Reviewer: William J. Fassbender



Young, J. (2015). *Promise*. Ann Arbor, MI: Sleeping Bear Press.

ISBN: 978-1585369140

Pages: 368

Student Review:

I definitely recommend *Promise* by Judy Young to readers in grades 3-8. *Promise* is a novel telling a strong story of a boy named Kaden and his journey to meeting his estranged father. It teaches the reader to be kind to all people, no matter their situation. I believe this book is important because it shows the reader the struggle between a middle school aged boy and his family situation. If the reader is not in a difficult family situation, they probably know one and can relate to the book in some way, shape, or form. *Promise* is also important because it shows the readers the relationship between someone going through a family crisis and their best friend. In this book, Kaden befriends a new student named YoYo. YoYo is unique in more ways than just his name. He helps Kaden through the situation and is always there for him, even when Kaden isn't always there for him.

Some types of people that might enjoy this book are mainly younger readers that enjoy a low action type of read. I believe that once the reader gets into it, they will be drawn into the whirlwind story. *Promise* is a book that I would definitely recommend to someone looking for a book to read. It gives powerful insight from a child's point of view about his father's absence and strange presence. I enjoyed this book and I am sure others will too.

Bailey Brockelbank
T. L. Hanna High School, Anderson, South Carolina
9th Grade

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Educator Review:

Growing up in the small town of Promise has been anything but simple for eleven-year-old Kaden. His mother passed away, his father was recently released from prison, and he was forced to live with his grandmother who was determined to not make the same mistakes with Kaden as she did with his father. As a result, Kaden is discouraged from having friends, with exception to a bird named Kubla. It's not until the new student Yo-Yo moves to town that Kaden is able to find a true friend who helps him stand up to his school bully and work through his emotional turmoil of whether or not to accept his father back into his life, despite signs that he has returned to his criminal ways.

Promise is a worthwhile read as it tackles the unique situation of a father's return to society from prison and the strain it causes on his son. This book expands the parental-prison narrative by exploring it from a rural setting, which is often underrepresented in young adult literature. Many of Kaden's issues come about as a result of the rumors that arise from his father's imprisonment and these rumors and conflicts are compounded by the fact that this story takes place in a small town. Young gives a voice to an audience of readers who are largely overlooked by young adult authors by showing how incarceration impacts the bond between a father and a son in a small town.

William J. Fassbender
The University of Georgia
Doctorial Student