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JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE & LITERACY EDUCATION

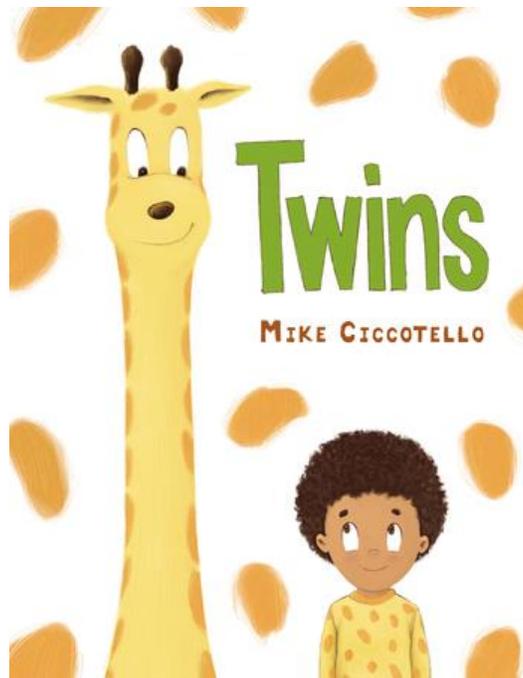
Review of *Twins*

Written & Illustrated by Mike Ciccotello

Adult/Educator Reviewer: Jessica Varsa

Parent, Athens, GA

Student Reviewers: Nora Varsa and Jozefine Varsa, 6 Year Old Identical Twins



Ciccotello, M. (2019). *Twins*. Farrar Straus Giroux.

ISBN: 9780374312121

Adult Review: Jessica Varsa

In the picture book *Twins*, author Mike Ciccotello brings to life the story of atypical twins, a little boy and his twin, who happens to be a giraffe. In *Twins*, the characters do everything together – from leapfrog to piggyback rides. Always having someone to talk to is a unique benefit of being a twin. We learn rather quickly that although the characters enjoy many of the same things, they do them differently. Trick-or-treating may be an exciting activity, but they pick different costumes. Although they both enjoy riding bikes, their methods vary. And despite both enjoying dancing, one is a line dancing fan while the other prefers to bust out their moves break-dancing!

These differences set the stage for what often arises between twins or even close siblings – squabbling. Arguments over who draws better, who is stronger, or who gets to use which tool first, arise and become quickly heated. Disagreements can last all afternoon between the twins, and even end in a nasty fight. But like most close relationships, it is impossible for them to stay mad for long.

Compromise is the main lesson of *Twins*, which becomes clear when the characters remember that they work best together. The characters acknowledge that being a twin has its ups and downs, but in the end being a twin is great!

I find the most appealing feature of the book lies in the development of the relationship between the characters. As most portrayals of twins, the book opens by conveying the characters' relationship as one of constant fun and agreement. As the story progresses we learn that as with most close relationships, and especially with young twins, learning what the other prefers may be an adjustment and not always be welcome. However, squabbles over how to do something usually end with compromise and a stronger bond.

As the mom of identical twin 6-year-old girls, I

recommend this book for families with twin children, as well as those with siblings close in age or even a child with an unrelated close friend. The illustrations are bright and engender feelings of closeness shared by twins, and the text is clear and brief for young readers or listeners. I also appreciated that the main characters were a giraffe and a child – even identical twins have physical differences that others do not notice, which are obvious to the twins themselves.

Adding to the story, the book is dedicated to the author's own twin sons, who inspired the story. The author's observations of his sons' interactions, both silly and serious, are brought to life within his first book.

Student Reviewers: Nora Varsa and Jozefine Varsa

Those aren't twins! (Being that the protagonists are a little boy and a giraffe.)

Sometimes our friends can't tell us apart either!

We have bunkbeds just like them!

We like the book because it's about twins like us!