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Very Last First Time



Synopsis

Eva Padlyat lived in an Inuit village on Ungava Vat in northern Canada. In winter, when people wanted mussels to eat, they searched along the bottom of the seabed. Eva had often walked on the bottom, helping her mother, but today – for the very first time – she was to go down below the thick sea ice herself. Her mother went with her to the shore and out onto the ice. The time was just right. The outgoing tide had pulled the seawater away, leaving only the ice above and the rock-strewn seabed below. Eva lowered herself through a hole in the ice and, by candlelight, had soon gathered a pan full of mussels. There was still time to explore, she decided. But she stumbled and her candle went out. She was alone in the darkness, and the tide had turned. When, at the end of her adventure, she is safe with her mother again on top of the ice, she says, "that was my very last first time for walking alone on the bottom of the sea."

Book Information

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Age Range: 5 - 9 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 4

Customer Reviews

In search of mussels while the tide is out, an Inuit girl walks alone beneath the ice of the frozen ocean, knowing she will never do it-for the first time-again. Pointillist paintings in purple and yellow emphasize the beauty of her undersea adventure. Ages 5-8. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Kindergarten-Grade 3 Eva Padlyat had often walked on the bottom of the sea with her mother. This extraordinary-sounding feat is routine for the Inuits of Northern Canada, who lower themselves through the thick winter ice at low tide to search for mussels on the ocean floor. It is now time for Eva's first trip under the ice alone. She and her mother pull their sleds across the snow until they find a place to chisel a hole; then Eva carefully lowers herself into the darkness. Lighting a candle, she begins to look for mussels; she then goes exploring. When she hears the tide coming in and drops her candle, she feels panicky, but she soon finds her matches and another candle to light her way back to the ice hole. On the surface of the ice once again, Eva sums up her adventure as her "very last first time" for walking alone on the ocean floor. This look at Eskimo life today combines the ancient custom of collecting mussels with modern features such as airplanes and snowmobiles. The story is well-developed, with just the right amount of suspense. The watercolor illustrations are somewhat uneven in quality; the colors in the land scenes are rather garish, and some figures are awkwardly proportioned. The eerie shades of the ocean floor are quite effective, however, and the strange seascapes lend an air of unreality. Very Last First Time is an intriguing view of a little-known way of life. Lucy Young Clem, Evansville-Vanderburgh County Public Lib . , Ind. Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

My children (1st & 2nd grade) really love this book. The premise had them leaping off the bed in amazement - "She goes under the SEA??? The ice is over her HEAD???? She goes by HERSELF????" Every detail was interesting to them - the tools used to hack under the ice, the mother letting her child go alone, the small Inuit homes, Eva living in a land where no trees grew - and they had so many questions - most of which were answered by the end of the story. We used the book to talk about: 1. mussels and how they grow & live, 2. tides, what causes them and how much the water level can vary between high tide and low tide, 3. the climate in northern Canada, 4. the Inuits, 5. emergencies - what happens initially to our bodies when we are afraid, and what we should try to do so that we can get out of our emergency safely, and 6. pointillism and the artist Seraut, and we made our own pointillism art masterpieces with Q-tips and paint. I did search the Internet for actual photographs of what Eva might have seen, but I couldn't find a single one! I couldn't find other references to the Inuit walking under the ice either. I would have loved to have shown those to my children.

Good book

This is one of the best books for young girls that I have come across. A young Inuit girl is sent under the ice at low tide to collect muscles for the family.. this time by herself. She gets distracted, the candles burn out leaving her in darkness just as she starts to hear the water returning. What an adventure. I buy this book as a gift whenever I need a present for a beginner reader girl.

Favorite story of my grandsons!

The plot is about walking under the sea; can you get more interesting than that?

Bought this book to go along with our Five in A Row studies and I'm glad to finally own our copy. Arrived as described and is a story that my oldest remembers.

As described in other reviews perfect for young girls.

My 5 year old daughter could read this book over and over. Love it.

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