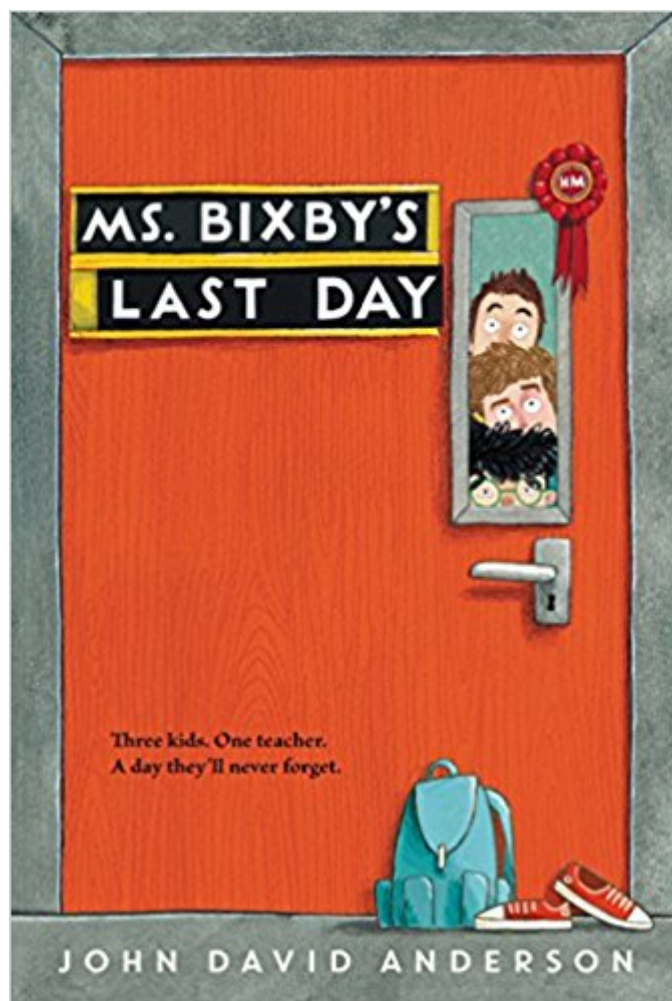


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Ms. Bixby's Last Day



Synopsis

New York Times Book Review Editor's Choice
"Kids won't just love this book. They need it."
•Soman Chainani, New York Times bestselling author of The School for Good and Evil
"Each page crackles as we embark on the greatest adventure of all."
•Gary D. Schmidt, Newbery Honor winner and author of Okay for Now
Everyone knows there are different kinds of teachers. The boring ones, the mean ones, the ones who try too hard, the ones who stopped trying long ago. The ones you'll never remember, and the ones you want to forget. Ms. Bixby is none of these. She's the sort of teacher who makes you feel like school is somehow worthwhile. Who recognizes something in you that sometimes you don't even see in yourself. Who you never want to disappoint. What Ms. Bixby is, is one-of-a-kind. Topher, Brand, and Steve know this better than anyone. And so when Ms. Bixby unexpectedly announces that she won't be able to finish the school year, they come up with a risky plan, more of a quest, really, to give Ms. Bixby the last day she deserves. Through the three very different stories they tell, we begin to understand what Ms. Bixby means to each of them—and what the three of them mean to each other.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 800 (What's this?)

Paperback: 336 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 77 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #14,744 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #21 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Death & Dying #251 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > School #431 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Friendship

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Gr 4—In a school filled with instructors who are either Zombies (old and boring), Caff-Adds (jittery), Dungeon Masters (cruel), or Noobs (overachievers), Ms. Bixby stands out as one of the Good Ones. Topher, Steve, and Brand all have their reasons to treasure their sixth grade teacher. Readers find out early on that their beloved Ms. B. has cancer and has to leave school immediately. The boys come up with an elaborate plan to honor her. In a pilgrimage as involved as Dorothy going to see the Wizard of Oz, the "Nerd Patrol" ditch school and travel to Ms. B.'s hospital in hopes of throwing her the farewell party of her dreams complete with cheesecake, wine, and Beethoven. In alternating chapters, we learn just why it is so necessary for each boy to partake in this adventure. Topher, the artistic one, hasn't been valued much by his distracted family. His self-worth is bolstered when he realizes Ms. B. has lovingly kept a file of all of his drawings. Brand's dad, who is disabled, is dependent on his son. When Ms. B. notices the stress Brand is under, she takes him on weekly shopping dates, providing nurturing time while they get groceries. Ms. B. defends brainy Steve when his overly strict dad complains about his grades and unfairly compares him to his perfect sister. During the immensely humorous and touching journey, the boys discover their own bravery and the strength gained through true friendship. VERDICT This story provides a full-spectrum, emotionally satisfying experience that will have readers laughing, crying, and everything in between. As Topher would say, this is one fraawesome (freaking awesome) book.—Diane McCabe, John Muir Elementary, Santa Monica, CA --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

—“Kids won't just love this book. They need it.” (Soman Chainani, New York Times-bestselling author of *The School for Good and Evil*)—“Forget the dragons. Forget the swords and shields. Here is the true quest: to face the unendurable, knowing defeat is inevitable, and yet continuing with dignity and honor and purpose and, even, joy. Each page crackles as we embark on the greatest adventure of all.” (Gary D. Schmidt, Newbery Honor winner and author of *Okay For Now*)—“A story of that one teacher we all have who we'll never forget, told with laugh-out-loud humor and oh, so much heart.” (Gordon Korman, New York Times-bestselling author of *Ungifted*)—“Brand, Steve and Topher are a comic, lovable crew, and wise, pink-haired Ms. Bixby is the teacher every child deserves. This is a touching, often hilarious story of endings, beginnings, and self-discovery. As Brand would say, fraawesome!” (Tricia Springstubb, author of *Moonpenny Island*)—“Anderson skillfully balances realism and comic exaggeration in an emotionally rich tale that holds no miracles, other than the small human

kind. – (Publishers Weekly (starred review)) – “This surprising, inspiring, and relatable book is perfect for boys and girls who loved Wonder and will make you fondly remember your favorite teacher. – (Brightly.com)

I expected to feel sad reading this story. I didn't expect laughing, quoting 12 yr old boys, and crying throughout what will be or must become a mandatory read for teachers, parents, just everyone. This is not written for just 8 - 12 year olds. There is depth, timeless lessons, and reality in metaphors. Definitely a winner! CLASSIC stuff. You'll love all three boys: Topher, Steve and Brand. You'll know them before you read about them! And, you'll learn a few new words thanks to Brand and his influence on his friends. You'll really love Ms. Bixby. Make sure your school library has this on their shelf.

This book showed up on a list of best books of 2016 for middle school. The topic, the death of a favorite teacher told from the perspective of three of her students, seemed intense but the publisher's information said Grades 3-7 and School Library Journal marked it Grades 4-6. Every review gave it 5 stars so, as a K-4 Grade librarian, I wanted to see for myself. Now having finished the story, I feel blessed to have met Ms. Bixby and her students. The shifting perspective gives the reader a chance to meet three brave, funny, vulnerable 6th graders and the teacher who made a difference in the lives of each of them. Sad as this story ultimately is, it is told with such humor that I laughed out loud through some of the escapades of that extraordinary last day. Do I think a third grader could handle this book? There are definitely some language and situations that might stop a 9 year old from appreciating the big picture. In a sense it would be like giving a kid Brie when he prefers Velveeta, This is a book that deserves to be put in the hands of the right reader. My job will be to find that reader.

Yes, there are plenty of juvenile delinquent activities described in this book. But will kids think hey, I should do that!? The answer is, no, of course not. Unless they have an extraordinary young teacher who gets a very serious form of cancer and has to leave school unexpectedly and then has to leave town altogether in order to have a radical last-chance experimental form of treatment. But then you might forgive those kids for skipping school with the intention of giving said-teacher the "last day" of her dreams -- even if they have to do a whole bunch of other mini-crimes to accomplish it. A good book, with a nice message.

This book, originally borrowed from the library, was so good that I pre-ordered the paperback version. It's a tender story about three sixth grade boys coming to terms with the fact that their teacher has cancer. Yet it's not artificial - Topher, Steve, and Brand are still very much sixth grade boys, acting and reacting the way sixth graders do. It felt true and poignant, and affected me in a way that Rebecca Stead's "When You Reach Me" did.

I love this book. I like the three boys who went to extreme measures to give their favorite teacher the goodbye she deserved. I like the teacher whom every student deserves to have every year of their schooling. I like the first-person point-of-view of each of the main characters. The author kept me guessing as he revealed the issues of each character, what was on the list of things they had to have, and why each item was on the list. I laughed at the scrapes and the outcomes of their endeavors and cried that they cared so much. Real stuff here.

Read with my 3rd grade daughter and we loved- bought a copy as Christmas gift for all her past/current teachers- "the good ones". Emotional and funny- if your child can't handle, wait or read first and decide, but otherwise a phenomenal book about the relationship between teachers and students, growing up, and coping with friends by our side. I RARELY post reviews.

My daughter absolutely loves to read. she has a book collection that would make any book lover jealous. We sat one day and searched through looking for books. With her being 9 I have a time time finding things that tread that thin line of adult/child. Ms. Box y'all last day did that beautifully. It was real and dealt with life, but had fun moments. It was absolutely perfect for her.

Loved this book. The author does a fabulous job of telling what is essentially a very sad story but in a way that is honest and true. The characters are incredible. Don't shy away from the book because it deals with dying and death. It's a must read, as far as I am concerned.

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